I: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

Liaalaomir clan on the Glyde River. Here was enacted the great drama of the Rock Python swallowing the two Creator Sisters which has tremendous import in ceremonial and mythological activity.[10] Even the men will not stay on or near this spot at night. The Gunabibi ceremony, although an enactment of this great event, is not conducted here for fear of disturbing the peace of the great father snake, thus causing him once again to come out of his subterranean depths and swallow those who have angered him.

All clan totems are thought to lie below the clan water hole in the subterranean waters. Here too will be found the old mythological ancestors who lived in the time of the activities of the totems on earth in the great mythological days when the world was made and named. When a ranga (higher totemic emblem) has been made by the men of the clan for a ceremony and has been used during the night time, it is put back into the mud of the water hole so that the .wongar (spirit of the totem) which is felt to be in the emblem may return to the well.

When a child is born it comes from this well as a spirit. In the well it has the appearance of a very small fish. The spirit comes to the father who is to be, and asks for its mother so that it may be born. The father points out the mother and the spirit child enters her vagina. This happens while the father is dreaming; or when he is out hunting he may notice something peculiar about the actions of an animal or bird which will lead him to the conclusion that his wife is going to have a child.

My informant arrived one morning obviously anxious to talk:

I had a nice dream the other night. I dreamed that a boy child walked past all the other humpies [Australian white term for native huts] in the camp and kept coming until he got to my house. He beat on the bark wall. He called out, "Father! Father! Where are you?"

"Here I am."

"Where is mother?"

I told him and wakened up. I thought to myself, "True." Yesterday I went fishing with my wife at the creek. I went up one side of the creek and she went up the other. By and by a bream fish came up and took her hook. He came up to it easily and quietly. My wife did not have to pull on the line, for he came in to her like he wanted to. My mielk [woman] was standing in the water only up to her ankles. He came up to her even though she was in the shallow water. Then he stopped quickly, shook

[10] See Chapter IX for a detailed description of the myth and ceremonies centered around this totemic well.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

himself against her leg, broke the line, and went back into the deep water. We did not see him again. I came across to her; I said, "What was that?" She said, "A bream fish." I said, "What did he do?" She told me. She said, "My father went fishing like this when my little brother was born; I think this fish shook against my leg for that.' I said, "Oh you know that." "Yes." "You remember my dream I told you about?" She said, "Yes, that's what I think. I won't menstruate any longer now because that baby fish is inside me."

A man from another clan told me this story:

My brothers and I took a dugout canoe and went fishing. We went a long way that day. It was dark when we came back. When we passed the long sand beach on Rabuma Island a turtle came out of the sea and looked at me. I heard him splash the water. It was dark and I was afraid. I said, "What's that?" I heard nothing then. We went on. We paddled slowly, for it was very late, and we were very tired. I heard something go "Wah!" I said, "What is that one?"—That turtle looked at me. All the men heard me call out.—We went on. The tide came in. The moon was still up. The Big Star came out. No light yet. We paddled slowly. Pretty soon that fellow came out again. He looked at me. It was light now, the birds had started to sing.—We were home. I left my canoe and went to my camp. This one followed me [the informant pointed to his third and last child, a small girl]. She had been in the canoe all the time, but I didn't know her.

I went to sleep. I dreamed she came to me. I went to the mainland next day. Wilkdjungo's mother saw my younger wife. A child had been sucking her breast. It had left a wet spot on the nipple. The old woman said, "That one will have a child soon."

I came home and quarreled with this wife. My other wife said, "Don't fight with her. She is going to have a baby." I stopped scolding. She was too young to know that a baby was inside her when I came from where the turtle had followed me and this baby had come home with me from that narra well.

If the child should die as a baby it would go back to the well, stay awhile and then return to the same mother. Narnarngo's wife's baby died. The baby went back to its waterhole to become a fish again for a little while and stay beside its wongar.

Narnarngo walked by his water hole. He had just killed a dugong. When he slept that night he dreamed that the child's marikmo (father's father) came to him and said, "I'm bringing my maraitcha [son's son] back to you." Soon the child was born. Everyone knew

1; Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

that it was the same baby because of the child's resemblance to the one that had died, which proved that the father's dream was true.

In 1898 Spencer and Gillen published their book, *Native Tribes of Central Australia,* in which they declare, "We have amongst the Arunta, Luritcha and Ilparra tribes, and probably also among others, such as the Warramunga, the idea firmly held that the child is not the direct result of intercourse, that it may come without this, which merely, as it were, prepares the mother for the reception and birth also of an already formed spirit child who inhabits one of the local totem centers. Time after time we have questioned them on this point and always received the reply that the child was not the direct result of intercourse." This is in reference to the opinion that among the natives of central and northern Australia there is no knowledge of physiological conception and that they believe impregnation of a woman to be entirely due to spiritual causes. Spencer and Gillen rather insisted on this fact because many of the whites of Australia believe that the natives practice the rite of subincision in the attempt to prevent conception. This operation is found throughout a large part of Australia; Spencer and Gillen rightly point out that it has nothing to do with birth control practices.

I was in very intimate contact with the Murngin natives. During my first eight or nine months among them I was firmly convinced that the people had no understanding of physiological conception and believed in the spiritual impregnation of a woman by a totemic child spirit. All the fathers told me their children had come to them in dreams as totemic souls, or in some extra-mundane experience, and asked that their mothers be pointed out to them. The men had complied with the request of the children, who had entered the vaginas of the mothers. During all this time, although I was in constant relationship with a large number of the men and there was practically no taboo on our conversations, which were of the most intimate nature, I could find no indication of any knowledge whatsoever of physiological conception; yet in the study I was making of the people, while looking at the problem from the point of view of the "total situation," that is, considering the whole of the culture, there were strong indications that the natives understood the true nature of the father's physical function.

The second time I entered the area I determined to go into this matter further, since the people I studied were but an extension of the central tribes on which Spencer and Gillen had reported. An occasion

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

groups (except, of course, ego's father with ego's mother and ego with his wife). The membership of each family is the same as in Euro-American families and includes the same members as found here, the only difference being that a man can have a number of wives, which means in Murngin society that the children have a number of mothers. The sister is not only sexually taboo to her brothers, but any direct contact with her is also taboo. The incest idea is enlarged upon to include these additional restrictions in the general behavior of the opposite sexes of one generation within the family. This extreme form of the incest taboo in the total behavior of brothers and sisters, expressed overtly in concrete negative acts (avoidance), contributes to the organization of the family of orientation. The avoidance rules become concrete symbols of the underlying rule of incest which forces marriage outside the family of orientation and thereby creates the family of procreation out of extra-familial personalities.

The father-son reciprocal is the solid bond around which ego's spiritual affiliations are organized, since by a mystical experience of his father he leaves the totem well as a tiny fish and is directed by his male parent into his mother's womb. The father's mystical experience is the expression of the creation of the family of procreation. It is in fact the first element in the filio-parental relationship, since it is the first moment when either parent is supposed to know the beginning of this new generation within his own family. The annunciation of the child to the father by a dream symbolizes the parents' sexual intercourse, and in Murngin thought both dream and intercourse are necessary for conception and birth.

This first spiritual bond built on the father-son reciprocal determines the child's place in the totemic ceremonies which are of major import in his adult life: his whole spiritual identity, including his totem and power names; his sacred well where his soul will return after death; and the dogma and ritual which surround all these spiritual entities. So much for the orientating relations of ego's generation and that of his parents. Within his own generation and his family of orientation his brothers and sisters are to be found. His brothers and he occupy an identical place within the social structure. They are in the same patrilineal line as he and enjoy the same solidarity with the father as he, the primary differentiating factor being the distinction between older and younger brothers, as expressed in the kinship terminology. The brothers are spiritually almost identical, since they have the same

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

593 602 father; frequently, because of the opportunities of competition for women among distant groups, there are actual animosity and warfare. Since older and younger brothers are clearly differentiated by separate terms, wawa and yukiyuko, and have a definitely regulated behavior toward each other, the relationship of bapa and his sons must be considered from this point of view. Does a father distinguish between older and younger sons, even though there is no term to express these functional differences and all sons are gatu? The answer is decidedly in the affirmative, as will be seen below from the chronologically ordered account of the normal relationship from the period before birth of the son until the death of both father and son.

262 When a "married" man has no children, he must observe a number of food taboos until a wife announces pregnancy. He cannot eat, whether he or another kills or gathers them, porcupine, emu eggs, snake eggs, iguana eggs, turkey eggs, crayfish, large barrimundi, or [851] crabs, until he acquires the right by old age. A child's birth removes all these taboos, but the child must be his, not a brother's.

781 842 843 The ideas surrounding birth give the father a prominent part in the procedure. The various spirits of the unborn and the dead live with the clan totems in the clan wells. As stated, a father dreams that the child comes to him, asking where it can find its mother, and enters the mother's vagina. The next day the man informs the wife that she is going to have a child, or, if it is his first child, to test the value of his dream he may keep it a secret. The natives believe these dreams are always true since a wife usually tells her husband a few days later that she has felt the movements of a child within her. The husband knows then that his dream is true. He sharpens his spears, rewraps his [771] spear-thrower, and prepares to go hunting, for he knows that he will be successful because his child has come from the totemic spirits within the water, bringing good luck with it. He kills an abundance [262] of game and brings it home. A slight ceremony takes place, after which he may eat all food, for, according to Murngin thought his wife having conceived, he is now a father. This removal of taboos on his diet furnishes one of the reasons for a man's eagerness to have children.

781 842 A child comes from its father's well on the father's clan territory, for clan descent is patrilineal. Sometimes the father may be in another part of the country and may dream that the child came from the well of the local clan. Then it would inherit not only its own clan's totems, but also those of the other, yet it would be a member only of his father's clan. The second water hole must belong to the same moiety

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

as his father's; for a father to be Yiritja and the son Dua would be impossible. No man has ever dreamed such an unorthodox concept—either because the moiety idea is such a complete part of Murngin thought that their dreams conform to it, or the men who have such dreams place no importance upon them and forget or suppress them. At all events, a child, male or female, ordinarily inherits only its father's clan and totems, and occasionally inherits in addition totems of another clan. Further, the dream clearly demonstrates a sociological connection between father and child even before birth. The author has recorded no birth without the dream.

Sometimes a man steals another's wife while she is pregnant. The child when born is considered a member of the new man's clan; when he becomes older he usually returns to his own father's clan and identifies himself with it, although he may have strong attachments to his second father's group.

All this indicates that patrilineal inheritance is from the actual father and his group, and not from a different clan, though of the same moiety; it also shows the importance of the actual father in Murngin thought.

Several informants volunteered that a man must abstain from the tabooed foods until he has had a child, because the release from the taboo made him quiet and settled so he would stop running after other women and would stay in one place to take care of his wives, children, and parents-in-law. The social implications of this are very important. By becoming a father he has finally become a husband; he has extended his patrilineal line descendingly and thereby strengthened his own family; and, third, he has, also through this child, strengthened his relationship to his wife's brother, to gawel (father-in-law), mokul (mother-in-law), and marelker (mother-in-law's brother). For, instead of only one direct reciprocal relation, he now has an additional indirect reciprocation with each. His son (or daughter) calls his wife's brothers "gawel" and has a strong bond of mutual aid and obligation with them. His son calls ego's mother-in-law "mari" and has a strong untabooed attachment to her; and to marelker the son also has a strong emotional relationship because ego's marelker is mari to the son. The creation of these social personalities shows the enormous addition to one's kinship personality through the birth of a son, who strengthens ego's position, adding to his security within the clan, the tribe, and with other tribes.

On the other hand, the birth of a daughter is of equal importance.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

561 which center in the men's ground and overflow during parts of the
562 rituals into the general camp where her world is centered.

The principle of sex, then, has been used to organize a status group, with the women and small children of either sex in one group and the initiated men in another. The women's group remains ritually un-
562 differentiated in a status sense except for a tendency to give women near
888 or in the menopause preference over younger women in those ceremonies in which women participate. For example, in the Gunabibi the old women beat the ground to stop Muit, and in the Djungguan it is felt to be more appropriate and effective for older women to dance around the warngaitja than for men to do so. This corresponds with the lifting of part of the feeling of taboo around the mother-in-law after she loses many of her secondary sexual characteristics and "gets to be an old woman and looks all the same as a man."

561 Murngin age grading is largely a religious phenomenon consisting
761 of a series of rites of passage from one age group to another in the life cycle of the individual. It seems, therefore, nearer the truth of Murngin thought to treat the life of the individual as the complete entity it appears to be in the thought of the culture. Each Murngin's beginning is in the sacred totemic well of his ancestors, and each Murngin's end is within the same subterranean depths. His first status is that of the unborn child in the form of a small fish which exists with others of his kind beside the totemic spirits of the clan, the totemic mythological ancestors, the ancient clan dead, and those who have recently died. He
[626] is under the control of his ancestors and the totem, and his passage from the world of the unborn to that of the living depends on the good behavior of his parents, particularly of his father. The Murngin think of this from the parents' point of view and conduct their lives more carefully because of the fear of childlessness.

561 The Murngin baby comes from the totem well through a religious
761 experience of the father, since it is the father who is in touch with the totem world of which the mother is supposed to have no knowledge.
●787 The father's mystical dream experience is itself a kind of rite of passage of the unborn and begins the child's socialization. The father's
951 announcement to the mother of the child's arrival (frequently, it must be admitted, after she has reported her pregnancy to the father, who has kept silent, he says, to test the validity of his experience) changes the father's age-grade status. It removes certain ritualistic food taboos and definitely establishes his place in the older men's group. This means, then, that the father-child reciprocal functions as a unit: the

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

consummation of his family of procreation through his first child's "birth" effects the father's spiritual birth into a recognized higher status in the community age grouping, and simultaneously the new being is taken into the lowest age grade.

As an old man, the Murngin learns the final mysteries of life by seeing the most esoteric of the totems. Ultimately he dies and assumes a new social status, and by the mourning rite of passage enters his last social grouping, for he still retains a social personality of his own as long as he is in the memory of his group. His ultimate fate is loss of social personality when he is forgotten as an individual and remembered only as an undifferentiated part of a long line of clan ancestors and is absorbed in the general sacredness of the clan well. The sacred power of the clan well derives in part from the knowledge of the souls of the long and the recent dead dwelling within it. The dead soul, when it is ceremonially ushered into the totemic well, is a spiritual part of the man's or woman's participation in the land of the living. The woman's spiritual existence, although not primary and direct as thought of by the Murngin, is nevertheless real and identifiable, for she has a number of sacred totemic names known to her father and brothers, she comes from the totemic water hole as a fish, and vicariously, and to some extent directly, participates in all the sacred totemic rituals. Her partial participation in these rituals which are enacted outside the men's ground also gives her a certain amount of ritualization.

As a man becomes more deeply integrated into his daily community life, that is, when he becomes old enough to go on expeditions as a responsible member of the blood feud and to be held accountable by the enemies of the clan as a part of his group, and when he marries and has children and extends his kinship personality by primary contacts, he at the same time grows deeper and deeper into his esoteric existence and becomes more deeply learned in the rituals and the sacred language.

A review of the chapter on economics and technology quickly convinces one that men make and use the greater number of the more complex tools, weapons, and implements. If all the complexities of the technological apparatus as a part of the society's adaptation to its natural environment were charted, each process receiving a line symbolizing its part in the general technical behavior, it would become apparent that the greater the complexity of the technology, the greater the participation of the men in it, and the simpler the technological processes, the more women participate. There is a possible correlation

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

larger reciprocation. In the chapters on Murngin kinship and local organization it was seen that the foundations of these structures are built entirely on reciprocity, and that the whole civilization might be described as in dynamic equilibrium. 181

Magic and War

Another belief centered around killing as a cause for war is that the spirit of the dead man enters the body of the killer and gives him double strength and actually increases his body size. When a man kills another during a tribal or interclan feud, he returns home and does not eat cooked food but subsists only on cold edibles until the soul of the dead man approaches him. He can hear the dead man's soul coming because the shaft of the spear which hangs from the stone head within the man drags on the ground and hits against the trees and bushes as he walks. When the spirit is very near, the killer can hear sounds coming from the dead man's wound (in a night fight the attacker usually strikes the sleeper's gullet). 775

The killer, ordinarily a young man and very frightened, in his fear runs to the camp of the old men. An old man tells him that he should not be afraid, but return and take the spear with which he has killed the man, remove the spear head, and put the spear end of the shaft between his own big toe and the toe next to it. The other end of the shaft is placed against his left shoulder. The left foot and side of the killer are used if he is right-handed, and the right side is used if he is left-handed. This is done so that the dead man's soul will not be afraid of the hand that killed its body. 775 788

The soul then enters the socket where the spear head was, and pushes its way upward into the leg of the killer, and finally into the body. It walks like an ant. It finally enters the stomach and shuts it up. The man feels sick and his abdomen becomes feverish. The killer rubs his stomach and calls out the proper name of the man he has killed (not his totem name, but his profane name). This cures him and he becomes normal again, for the spirit leaves the stomach and enters his heart. When the spirit enters the heart it has the same effect as if the blood of the dead man had been given to the killer. It is as though the man, before he died, had given his life's blood (powers, physical and spiritual) to the man who was to kill him. 775

The slayer, grown larger and exceedingly strong, acquires all the life strength the dead man once possessed. When the slayer dreams, the soul tells him that he has food for him and gives directions where 775 787

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

to go to find it. He says, "Down there by the river you will find many kangaroo," or, "In that old tree there is a large honeybees' nest," or, "Near that large sand bank you will harpoon a very large turtle and find many eggs on the beach."

The killer listens, and after a little time sneaks away from camp by himself and goes out in the bush, where he meets the soul of the dead man. The soul comes very close and lies down. The slayer is frightened and cries, "Who is that? Somebody is near me." When he draws near where the spirit of the dead man was he finds a kangaroo, or, if he has gone to the sea beach, he discovers a turtle. It is unusually small. He looks at it and understands the meaning of its being there in the place where he had heard the movements of the dead man's soul. He takes sweat from under his arm and rubs it on his right arm, if he is right-handed, and on his left, if he is left-handed. He picks up his spear and calls out the name of the dead man and spears the animal. The animal is immediately killed but becomes much larger while dying. The man attempts to lift it. He finds it impossible because it has grown so large. He leaves the kill and returns to camp to tell his friends. He says when he arrives, "I have just killed the soul of the dead man. Do not let anyone hear of this because he might get angry again." His more intimate friends and relatives go out with him to help skin the animal and prepare it for eating. When they cut it up they find fat everywhere, which is considered one of the greatest delicacies in the native larder. When they cook it, only very small pieces are placed on the fire at first. They are tasted with much care, and the meat always tastes unpleasant.

Then the whole animal is cooked and a feast made with the parts more appreciated by the natives. The remainder is carried back to the main camp. The old men of the camp look and see that it is an animal of enormous size. They gather around it and someone asks, "Where did you kill him?"

"Up there by the river."

The old men know that this is no ordinary kill because there is fat everywhere. After some little time one of the old men asks, "Did you see somebody's soul out there in the bush?"

"No," lies the young man.

The old men then taste the flesh of the animal, but it does not taste the same as it ordinarily does. It has a slightly different flavor, it is not like a natural kangaroo or turtle.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

628 and his companion, had them sleep beside him. After a time they all went to sleep. Maritja felt something in his hair. He raised up, sat down by the fire; he said to his young charges, "Don't you go to sleep now. Something was walking about in my hair. I think it was sent to warn me. Maybe it was a spirit to tell me that somebody would get speared tonight." He talked very loudly for everyone to hear, in the hope that it might frighten the younger men and prevent them from carrying out their plot. Everyone remained quiet.

[825 187] A little bird (willy wagtail) lost its footing in a nearby tree and fluttered about in the branches. Maritja knew then that something was going to happen. "That bird," he said to the young men, "is telling us a story. He has always come and told us black men when trouble and spearmen were around. Then that one walked in my hair; that meant something. I think you boys had better go. I think something is going to happen."

Kamata, one of the young men, said, "No, we will stay here. I am going to lie down. I want to go to sleep."

The young men lay down and Maritja put his legs over the body of the smaller one. Presently Maritja and the two boys were in a deep sleep. By this time it was late. The moon was high in the sky. When the moon had gone down and it was very dark, Balliman and Maiangula awakened. Maiangula said, "You, Balliman, you go kill Gurlbaiili. You, Djowa, you go kill Kamata. I am going to kill Gurnboko." Balliman and Maiangula arose, but Djowa remained quiet. Balliman with Berundais sneaked up to Gurlbaiili's camp. Djowa, meanwhile, had placed his spear in the fire to make it hot so that he could straighten it, and because it would cut better when he tried to kill the sleeping man. While this was occurring, Maiangula removed the steel blade from his spear and sharpened it. He sneaked up on Kamata himself with the spear head in his hand and sank it into the latter's jugular vein. Maiangula then turned his attention to the second man, but he was nervous and attempted to dispatch him too quickly. Instead of hitting him in the gullet, he struck his side. The young man who was wounded started crying, "Mother, Mother, Mother." Balliman, meanwhile, in attempting to approach near enough to Gurlbaiili to sink his spear into him, had run into a pandanus patch, which was around the sleeping man's camp, and because of its thickness and the sharpness of the thorns, he was unable to get through it. He walked around the edge of the pandanus trying to find a path, but just before he was near enough to stab him he heard the thud of the spear entering the small boy's body; he was afraid, and he and Berundais ran away.

In the morning the news of the killing was carried to the nearby camps. Raiola, a brother of the slain man, arrived with some of his kinsmen. Raiola cursed Maiangula and started fighting with him, but when he saw Berundais he thought that this man was probably to blame for the killing,

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

trickery, and that he was attempting to get him to bend his face down so that his sons could spear him, so he said he was not thirsty and that he had decided to leave. Baerwit said, "Before you go I want to make my people one in a makarata. They are three groups now." Birindjaoi said, "Yes, you do that so that we won't have a lot of spear troubles." The Djinba and Ritarngo peoples who were under Baerwit's leadership stood up and looked meaningly at each other; but the other group, the Gunalbingi, stood up and looked at the ground, which indicated they were not at one with the others in their plot to kill Birindjaoi. While they stood there a white light seemed to play all over his body like the reflection of the sun's light in a pool. Raiola noticed that Birindjaoi's body seemed to change. The light came and went several times. The first time that it came it was a spirit to warn him and Raiola that trouble was there for them. The former did not see it, but Raiola did. Raiola saw it like the flash of lightning in a dark night, and it made him shut his eyes.

Birindjaoi said again to Baerwit, "Go ahead and make these people one."

Baerwit said, "My legs are tired. You go ahead and we will come behind you."

Birindjaoi said, "No, we will walk together."

Raiola and he walked together. Raiola talked to him in a distant language which the others could not understand. He said, "They don't understand me in this language. I saw three lights shine on you. I know now those men want to hurt you." The group of men meanwhile had been walking toward a wooded plain. When they were very near it Baerwit started walking rapidly toward the two. He cried out to his chief fighter, "Tjari, you run and catch Raiola. We cannot hurt him; he belongs to our own people, but he will fight if we try to spear Birindjaoi." The group of clansmen formed around them. An old man, who was a near relative to Birindjaoi, quietly stood up beside him and put his abdomen against his back so that no one could spear him when he was not looking. Raiola, before this had happened, had given him a spear, and Blumberi, also a relative by marriage to Birindjaoi, had presented him with a spear-thrower. Raiola then turned to Baerwit. He said, "You think you are going to kill him? You kill him and I will kill one of your men. No, I won't kill one; I shall kill two. Birindjaoi is a messenger man and you have no right to kill him. You are doing wrong. All right; I will do wrong and kill people who are near to me."

Tjari ran at Birindjaoi with his spear pointed at him. Raiola turned upon him with his spear, as did Birindjaoi. Tjari moved back into his group. One of the Djinba warriors threw a spear at Birindjaoi when he was not looking. The old man called out in time for him to grab the spear before it hit him. Raiola threw a spear at his attacker and caught the latter in the thigh. The man fell on his knee and from this position

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

the young boys to one side. He held his spear in his hand and shoved it into the other man's abdomen. 628

The wounded man groaned and cried, "What is wrong?"

"Danginbir! You remember him, don't you? He was the one whose head and body you threw in the water."

General confusion prevailed in the camp. Everyone cried, "Why did you do that?"

"This one [the man he had just killed], a long time ago, killed that little boy's [Kamata's] brother. He [Kamata] had no older brother to look out for him and he was killed. This bone I have in my hand brought him back. It was just as if that little brother [Kamata] had opened my mind when he died, for I forgot that big brother. I thought about him now."

After the excitement had died, everyone said, "That is too long ago for a young man like Natjimbui to think about it. It is much too long. He did not think for that far back."

Several of the older men turned to the two old Darlwongo and said, "We think that you told that young man something." They emphatically denied it, as old men always do when they have "pushed" young men into a killing. While everyone was talking and shouting and the relatives of the man who had been speared were wailing, the Marderpa men of the camp tried to make a ring of spearmen around Natjimbui. Natjimbui edged out of the group so that no one was at his back. "You people stand back there," he said. "If you come close I will kill another one of you." They stood back. "You people sleep over there," continued Natjimbui, "I will sleep over here away from you. Tomorrow morning I will come out for you." (This meant that he would run before them in a makarata.)

The two old men went with him so that he could sleep. In the morning he painted himself, as did the Marderpa; he ran before the Marderpa, with the two old men accompanying him. They chased him inside a mangrove jungle. This was done a number of times. Finally they grew tired and the old men of the Marderpa clan said that they had had enough.

Natjimbui danced the net dance, which symbolized his catching the soul of the man who had been killed. After that he put his leg out to have it stabbed, but the Marderpa refused. [535]

They buried the body, left the Darlwongo country, and after one night's camp arrived in the Gwiyula territory. Natjimbui accompanied them. When they had buried the Marderpa man a Kalpu man had cut the armlets off the Marderpa. When Natjimbui arrived here he said that he was going to leave them and go to the Crocodile Islands. The father of Gurnboko (the young man wounded by Maiangula) said, "No. Let us wait and sleep here tonight. We will all go tomorrow."

That afternoon omens of ill luck appeared to Natjimbui. His spear fell down and the stone head broke. Probably a mokoi (evil ghost) tried 628 787

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

628 [787] to break this spear. If a man's feather headdress or parrot-feather arm streamers fall off during the war period, it is a mokoi's doing.

The Kalpu man knocked off little pieces from the edge of his stone spear head. He chipped it only on one side to make it very sharp. Night had come. Natjimbui's wives slept on each side of him. He lay on his side near a small fire. The Kalpu man, when everyone was deep in sleep, sneaked up to Natjimbui's side and shoved his spear into his body at the base of the ribs. Natjimbui rose on his elbow but did not cry out. Gurnboko's father began shouting. Everyone started crying, and once more general confusion reigned throughout the camp. They cried, "Maringo! maringo!" They thought that an enemy group had surrounded the camp. Someone called, "Djawarlt!" Natjimbui arose to his feet with the spear in his side and gathered up his own spear and spear-thrower. He walked back from the camp and its firelight until he was in the darkness. A Marango clansman called out his name, but he did not answer. He hooked up his spear and threw it at him. He missed. Another Marango came close to him and called his name. Natjimbui speared him in the abdomen. He then turned and walked away from the camp carrying his spear-thrower. His spears were depleted. He walked away and then came back to the fire. He pulled the handle of the spear out of his own body, but the stone head of the spear remained inside. He burned the handle of his spear-thrower [752] until it was red hot, and put it against his wound. This was to make it smaller and so that it would close up properly. He walked slowly away from the fire until he came to the mangrove jungle. He retraced his steps, leaving his tracks in the mud pointing toward the river. He came back from the river walking on the low limbs of the mangrove trees, attempting to make it impossible for his enemies to trace him. He came to a dry place in the rocks and walked along the stones and grass to a mangrove creek. He went into the water and then back to a dry place and then crossed another small creek.

Blood was dripping from his wound. He put grass inside the hole. He dropped his spear-thrower for he was growing weak. The tracks went a little farther and were lost. He had not been found at the time the author left the Murngin country. The searching party which had followed the trail decided he must have crawled on his hands and knees so as not to make tracks, and that he had successfully stopped the flow of blood.

A makarata was held, in which Natjimbui's relatives chased the Kalpu.

This is the last episode in the Murngin feud that I followed while in the north. When I left, plots were being formed to continue its eternal flow through the lives of the clans participating in the blood feud. The history of this feud shows clearly that although clan solidarity is of considerable importance, and at times it is even possible that two or more clans may ally themselves for a short period, the kinship system tends to break down these solidarities and make a feud almost the activity of one individual.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

754 and the magician twists his tongue so that the top of it lies on the bottom of the mouth and the reverse side faces the palate. He is told that in three days—but there is no particular set time or magical number—he will die: "The first day you will be very happy, the next day you will be sick, and the third day you will die." After he leaves the spot where the operation has taken place, the magician runs ahead, hides, and waits for him, hits him with a club and cuts his body in two. One part of the body flies in the air in one direction and the other in the opposite. They become like leaves in the wind and disappear.[4] Several hundred feet away they reappear and the body becomes whole again. This process is repeated a number of times until the victim is near his camp, to which he returns. The magician sneaks away in the bush and returns to his own camp.

The man who has lost his soul feels very weak. His wives ask if he has had his soul stolen, and he says, "Oh, no, I have had dysentery, and I am very sick from it." The first day he feels very well, finds an abundance of food and seems very cheerful; the second day he sickens, and the third day he dies. A "white" magician is then called by the 756 relatives to ascertain who has been responsible. He looks at the dead 781 man to see what spirits are standing beside him, for the spirits of the killers are nearly always to be found by their victim's corpse, though only medicine men can see them. The doctor then announces the name of the killer and the relatives discuss the best way of avenging the death.

754 When a woman is killed the operation is considerably different. The rope is placed around her neck, she is dragged from the camp to a hiding place in the jungle, a fire is built, a paper-bark or basket receptacle is made ready, and green ants, a lizard and an orchid bulb are collected; but instead of making an incision below the heart the magician enters the body of the woman through her vagina. In operating on a man the magician faces his victim in a squatting position, but in opening a woman he works from the side with his legs pressed together for fear sexual desire will overcome his magic.

He has the killing stick in his palm. The skin around the Mount of Venus is pushed back until it reaches the navel. The magician inserts his hand in the vaginal orifice, goes forward when the woman inhales and keeps his hand quiet when she exhales. The woman is kept in a

[4] The word "warro" means leaf, also house, as well as the soul. The warro (soul) makes a malli or shade. A leaf does the same thing. This is possibly the association of ideas which gives the two the same name. Houses are shelters and are made of leaves.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

alive, while the second provided for himself and was treated like any other man except that he talked and was spoken to by a sign language. The relatives of these two assume that mokois had entered their heads and that some day they would be led out into the bush, where someone would steal their souls, for "plenty of crazy men have been killed that way." It is thought that when these men were babies a dog had walked over the body of the more normal one a few times but had then been kicked out of the way; while the dog had walked over the other one several times, thus making him much more insane. "That one [the normal one]," said his brother, "when he was a baby a dog walked over him once and maybe twice. That made it so he couldn't hear or talk. I think that other one had a dog walk over him five or six times before his mother kicked that dog. I think that when the mother of that first boy kicked that dog he yelped and that is the reason he is not silly like that other crazy man. That other dog just went 'Unh' and didn't call out, and that is the reason his head is no good."

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Image Whipping.—Another form of magic is to draw an image and then go over the whole of the body, naming each part and using the name of the intended victim. The image is then whipped with strings. This will cause a man's body to rot to pieces, and it is supposed to have killed several men among the various tribes in northeastern Arnhem Land.

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Dreaming and Magic.—A bad dream can also cause sickness. Dreams of an open grave, of a recently dead man, or of the totemic emblem are among those which cause a man to rise from his sleep, build up his fire, put a branch of green leaves in the fire until it is smoking, brush himself off, and, if it seems to have been a particularly unpleasant dream, brush off the members of his immediate family.

753 787 751

Excretion and Magic.—There is a certain amount of fear among the Murngin that excreta or waste food products will be picked up by an enemy sorcerer and used to inflict sickness upon them. The belief, however, is not very strong, since no great care is exercised to hide this matter so that it cannot be used by the sorcerers. A man, however, before urinating or defecating, digs a hole and squats over it. He is seldom seen standing while urinating. Women squat too, but when in the bush put their hands on their knees and bend their knees slightly while remaining partially upright.

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If there is a particular fear of magic, fish bones, kangaroo bones,

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1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

754 anything that a man or woman has been eating are carefully picked up and hidden.

754 514 The magicians are believed to take the excrement at times and place it in a fire where there are hot stones which are supposed to make the victim very ill; at other times it is placed between the limbs of two trees, as are the pieces of refuse; the rubbing of the branches causes a sore in the victim's throat.

C. White Magic and the Healer

755 White magic is an effective force used to cure sickness, heal wounds, take away the malignant effect of a snake bite, and, in general, to remove from the individual a feeling of dysphoria and to give him a sense of well-being and adjustment to his community.

The white magician usually performs this function and applies this power. He can remove foreign objects which have been shot into the body of the sick man, and diagnose on the principle that the patient can live if the cause of illness is only a foreign object, but must die if his soul is stolen.

756 *Individuality and Social Personality of the White Magician.*—The individuality of the white magician is not different from that of the ordinary man. The only noticeable tendency in all the observed healers was their joviality and pleasantness in their ordinary social relations. There were no indications of the psychopathic personality, for psychologically and physically they were a very normal group.

The social personality of the healer is different from that of the ordinary man's only because of his additional magical powers; otherwise he participates in the culture much the same as anyone else. He marries, has children, hunts, fishes, fights, and enters the ceremonial life in a manner no different from that of other men. There is but one [184] rigid taboo on his behavior: he cannot submerge himself in salt water without losing his power. Evidence is conflicting as to the existence of [262] food taboos. If there are such, they were not observed nor did the magicians admit any. The most successful healers were observed eating the foods which some of the evidence claimed were taboo to them. The reason for the belief in such restrictions seems to be that during their novitiate they undergo certain food privations.

The healer gains his power through extraordinary experiences with two or possibly three soul-children who afterwards become his helpers. Both the medicine man and his familiars are called marngit. He can, [787] in some cases, foretell the future and read a man's mind.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

and present to his relatives as reminders. The power which these relics possess is due to the soul of the dead following the bones. The soul is a true or totem-well warro. It listens from the totem well and comes when it is needed for an avenging expedition or to help its possessor in time of trouble. Any account of a clan feud is always filled with the use of these relics. Usually, when a maringo expedition is starting, a magical ceremony is gone through by the avenging group in which the bone of the dead plays the central rôle and decidedly helps to a successful conclusion. The gondjurma or killing stick used by the black magician to puncture the heart of his victim has great power, first, because it is associated with the dead body, second, because it is believed that the souls of the victims cluster about the point, and third, because it gains power by passing through the hands of a great number of men as it is traded from clan to clan and from tribe to tribe. The soul which adheres to this magic is also the Wongar one. It is like a friend to its possessor and he is its master. All of these souls are in or on the stick and can be called for help in hunting or fishing. They will also come to a man when he dreams. They will help foretell the future for him. If he is to be ill, he will feel something pricking him like the end of the stick. If good things are going to happen, one of the souls will come and tell him. If a stick is supposed to have killed a large number of men, all of the souls are supposed to be with it, but actually they are looked upon as one, and it is not so much an individual soul as a kind of diffused power or mana. A killing stick can be in the possession of a magician, or he can give it to an ordinary man who is one of his friends. Such a stick is always kept wrapped in paper bark and covered just as though it were a totemic emblem or ceremonial object and must not be subjected to the profane sight of women or the uninitiated.

When a man wishes to obtain its power to help him in hunting he scrapes off pieces, chews them and swallows them the night before the hunt. Immediately afterwards he shuts his eyes, says nothing, and goes to bed. Next morning he utters not a sound and goes out with his spears looking for game or for fish. "Those souls which the stick killed before this have gone into the water or out into the bush and they have stopped the fish and game so that they can be found. When the man arrives he sees a few. He spits in the water (he is fishing) and a lot of fish come there. He spears one fish and when he spears the one all the rest go dead as if you had poison in the water."

If he were hunting kangaroo it would be impossible for him to miss,

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

764 533 (13) A plank floating on the tide and coming toward the shore (pa-pung, probably a Malay word).
(14) A hollow log floating on the incoming tide (u-lo-ba-ri).
(15) A small oyster found on the plank (rar-i-tji).
(16) Coconuts floating on an incoming tide (ta-on-gil).
(17) The country where the coconut, hollow log, and plank come from. "We don't know what that country is. No people are there. We only sing it because the old old people sang it that way."
(18) The back of a turtle (near land) (go-ar-tji).
(19) The head of a tortoise-shell turtle (wil-ar-a).
(20) People where the coconuts come from—the east (ki-lur-o).
(21) Paddle (mar-ra-la).
(22) Canoe (li-pal-pa).
(23) Noise the paddle makes on the gunwale (ma-la-o-ma).
(24) A small bird crying out on the beach when it sees the people coming in from the canoe (go-lo-wit-pit).
(25) Paddle (mar-ra-la).
(26) The paddles being thrown on the beach.
(27) Canoe rolling about on the beach with the sea hitting against it.
(28) Men walking along on the beach.
(29) Men looking for turtle eggs in the sand beach.
(30) Men following the tracks of turtles going toward the nest.
(31) The turtle nest (ka-tji-ng).
(32) Turtle eggs.
The men are drinking the white of the turtle egg (i-di-ka).
(33) Basket (kan-nan-gir).
The men are putting the eggs in the basket.
(34) Putting the basket on the shoulder and carrying it down to the shade.
(35) Putting the eggs down in the shade.
(36) Walking fast down the large path to the well.
(37) Cleaning the dirt and refuse out of the well.
(38) Washing oneself with the water because of the dirt on the body from cleaning out the well.

764 533 ●787 It is at this place in the song sequence that some of the men get into the symbolic basin, the water from the melon shells is poured over them, they wash and cover themselves with red ocher. These are men to whom the dead relative has appeared in a dream. They are washing away his soul because it would make them sick. "You have a good friend of yours who is dead a little while ago; you feel very sorry. At night you go to sleep. You dream and he comes to see you. You sing this garma song the way we do this. You won't worry any more. You

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

won't dream any more. But suppose you didn't have these songs, that spirit would come and make you sick and maybe kill you.—When we dream of our dead relative we ask our brothers to sing for us while we go hunt for turtle. We come back, get all our things, our spears and our dilly bags and our belts, put them in the well and sing over them."

(39) Taking off ornaments and drying them on the well.
(40) Going back to the turtle beach, cleaning off dirt under the big trees. (The leaves are now brought in for the fire and smoke ritual.)
(41) Gathering wood for a fire.
(42) Fire burning.
(43) Coals of a fire smoking.
(44) People are sleepy and they sleep.
(45) Waking up.
(46) Smoking a cigarette.
"The smoke goes up from the tobacco (na-rai-li)."
(47) Red cloud (ri-pa).
That smoke went up into the sky and made a red cloud. The red cloud song indicates the singing is completed.

Eastern Dua Sea Cycle of Songs.—The eastern Dua clans, namely, those found around Buckingham and Arnhem Bays along the western shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria, possess the following sequence of garma songs and dances. The first song usually sung in this area is about a Wongar yolno, who was paddling a canoe out in the ocean.

(1) Wongar yolno (mi-tja-lo).
(2) Black sea grass (dji-o-el).
(3) A sea bird (dja-rok).
(4) A very small fish (yint-gar).
(5) A salt-water snake (yar-luer).
(6) Salt-water turtle (ka-ri-wa).
(7) A floating hollow log (wir-o-ko).
(8) The tide going out (ka-pu-mon-oak).
(9) The tide is standing still far out (ka-pu u-tu nor-o-tin kan-ga).
(10) Burial log (dai-mer-i).
"He walks around on the bottom of the sea, he is a Wongar. We only see him at night and he looks like a hollow log."
(11) "The man [Wongar yolno] is coming to the shore now. The tide is rolling the canoe in and it is high tide" (tur-ri-u-na, "pumping out that canoe").
(12) Paddle (ma-tin): danced by women.
They carry the paddles on their shoulders, put them in the shade. The yolno is supposed to be walking around now look-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

APPENDIX IV

DREAMS

DREAMS are always related to the extraordinary in Murngin experience. They are never expressive of the ordinary round of events but are definitely placed in the category of the supernatural. It is believed that when a man dreams his soul is moving about over the country away from the body and observing what is going on elsewhere. If, for example, he dreams of a fight in a distant country he believes the soul has been watching this fight in the far-distant country and reporting to his body what has happened. The various experiences that the man dreams are supposed to be those which his soul has been going through during his sleeping hours. During the hot afternoon the men frequently sleep in the shade, and if it becomes necessary to waken one of them, this is never done hurriedly but with great gentleness and care for fear that the soul will not have time to return to the body.

The soul, during these extra-corporeal experiences, is in a world where the totems, the unborn totemic children, and other extra-mundane creatures exist. The dreams in which the soul has all of its extraordinary experiences can be both beneficial and dangerous to the man or woman who dreams. Dreams by women would not fit into the general structure of Murngin society, since the world of the extraordinary is largely experienced by men. There is no doubt that women dream; but the social situation which would cause dreaming in men under many conditions would not exist for women, and if there were any ritual causation of dreaming it would be of a very weak kind.

It is necessary for a man to dream before his child is born. This dream is always of an extraordinary variety since the Murngin consider the child to have left its totem well and approached the father and asked him where it could find its mother. It is the father who directs the child to its mother; it then enters her womb, to be carried by her until birth.

Just before or during a great ceremony such as the Narra, Djungguan, or Gunabibi one or more of the participants is supposed to dream of a recently dead man who belonged to his totemic clan and who possessed the same totem. The power name of the man is then given to the totemic emblem which is to be used, which means to the Murngin that there is an identification between the man and the totem. This spiritualization of the dream to the level of the sacred totemic world finds expression in the fundamental myth in Murngin social organization, namely, the story of the two Wawilak

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

sisters. After all the sacred drama had been enacted by them and they had been swallowed by the Great Father and taken down into the holy waters in the lower depths of the totem well, the Wawilak men arrived and saw the scene of the tremendous struggle in which the Wawilak sisters had used all of the sacred rituals they knew to prevent their being defeated by the great python. The men, who had been searching for the sisters, went to sleep there that night and during the night they dreamed. In the dream their Wawilak sisters returned and taught them all of the sacred ceremonies that they had sung and danced before being taken down into the sacred water hole. The souls of the Wawilak men were the beings who experienced and first learned these ceremonies and transmitted them through the dream to the mundane bodies of the men, and from them the knowledge of how to perform correctly the great ceremonies was passed on from generation to generation to the present day.

Most of the dreams experienced by the Murngin are felt to be of a dangerous character and sometimes directly responsible for causing illnesses. Whenever a man has had a dream of this description he immediately builds up his fire and goes through the leaf (warntdjer) ceremony to chase away any evil which might have come with the dream, either in the form of the soul of a dead man, the power of some great totem, or because of associated images with the totem of the dead, as, for example, in the dream of an open grave or of a man with ceremonial blood upon him. If the dream is of the pronouncedly dangerous variety the man, when he awakens, may put his whole family through the warntdjer ceremony to make sure that the stronger evil has been removed. Dreams are definitely associated with black magic, for at times it is difficult for a man to determine which is dream and which is waking reality. Occasionally a man will have a dream in which he sees himself being subjected to sorcery; he awakens and believes the dream to have been something that happened to him in his waking experience.

Munyiryir's brother declared that Kimingmulu had attempted to steal his soul. He said that two or three nights before he made his accusation he was lying asleep with his wife in his camp on Pudjeriki Island when just before morning someone came along and stepped on his foot. He was dreaming at the time. He did not think this was part of his dream but that someone was trying to steal his soul. When he awakened he looked to see who had stepped on him because he thought that someone was trying to get hold of him to put a log on him. He followed the tracks that were near him and discovered them to be Kimingmulu's. He said nothing to the suspected sorcerer but talked the matter over with his brothers and other near relatives. The man he accused was a member of a group with whom his clan had had strained relations. After careful interviewing it became clear that Munyiryir's brother did not know which was dream and which was actuality, but that his seeing the tracks of one who belonged to a pos-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

sible enemy group made him decide in favor of the reality of his experience. 787 754

After much conversation and discussion about it among the members of the two groups, it was decided that it must have been a dream and that it was not true. It was obvious that both sides wanted the relations to remain friendly.

There is some evidence that dreaming may explain the beliefs of sorcerers that they have killed certain people, since once a man gains a reputation for being a killer, and given the fact that the sorcerer kills men who stand in unfriendly relations with his group, it seems highly likely that some of his dreams would organize his antagonisms into a folk pattern in which he would be the soul stealer and his enemies the victims.

APPENDIX V

MURNGIN PERSONAL NAMES

The personal names of the Murngin are directly or indirectly connected with the various parts of the social structure to which the possessor belongs. The kinship and family structure are given expression in the fact that a man usually obtains his father's father's or mother's mother's brother's names, which conforms to the alternation of generation principle found in the extended kinship organization and in the subsection system. The clan and moiety are directly related to the personal names because some of the sacred and secular names always refer to an individual's totem and are usually connected with a clan well, or they may be the names of certain mythological ancestors which are again connected with the clan well. These names may be part of the Narra ceremony, since the names of the clan wells and those of the totem are called during this ritual. This is also true of the Wawilak cycle of rituals because the names of the ancestors are shouted during such ceremonies as the Djungguan, which means again that they have a totemic reference. A partial list of the names follows: 551 614 616

Men's Names: 551

Dar-per-aoi: the clan country from which this individual came.
Gur-nirn-oi: from the stone found in his clan country.
Walt-chi-mi: the name of a hollow drum-like totemic emblem which is supposed to stand up and walk around in the water and make a noise like a trumpet playing.
Nal-mi-a: mosquito.
Gan-du: refers to a totemic song and ship, the black color of a sail.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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at each end, their holes. Cross-hatched panels *f, f, f,* represent the paths made by the *gunjun* crabs as they ran from one hole to another.

The turtle track has now been transformed into a group of red and yellow sand-hills and the holes of the *gunjun* crabs into low bushes.

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(a) THE CONCEPTION BELIEFS

Throughout the eastern side of Arnhem Land the aborigines believe the spirit child visits the father in a dream and asks to be directed to his future mother. The sources from which these children spring, however, vary with the different localities.

At Groote Eylandt, the children travel on the winds, those of the *wirirkapara* moiety on the *mamariga* (south-east) wind,[9] and those of the *oranikapara* (equivalent to the *jiritja* on the mainland) on the *bara* (north-east) wind.[10] The little spirit child hides in the grass until it has an opportunity of visiting the father in a dream and asking him for a mother.

At Milingimbi, Warner[11] states, the spirit child, who has been living in the totemic well in the form of a small fish, asks the sleeping father the name of its mother. The father points her out, the child enters her body and starts life as a human being.

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It was at Yirrkalla, however, that I was able to obtain, through the medium of the bark paintings, a more complete account of the conception beliefs.

(i) *The Conception Beliefs of the Dua Moiety of Yirrkalla*

The people of the *dua* moiety believe that when *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man, creates the rain clouds he places in them a number of spirit children, *juntu*. These *juntu*, who are so small that only the medicine-men can see them, descend on the raindrops to the land, or the sea. If on the land, the little *juntu* enter one of the various *dua* yams, fruits, and especially the *dua jurapang* or *liruwar* wild honey; if the *juntu* falls in the sea, it inhabits the *dua* fish or the green turtles. The little child spirits of *Tjambuwal* will not have anything to do with *yirritja* foods.

One day, as shown in the painting, two men catch a green turtle, bring it to the shore and cut it up so that everyone can have a meal. The cutting up of the turtle releases the *dua* spirit child living in its body. That night, when everyone is asleep, the spirit child, *juntu*, visits one of the men in a dream and says:

[787]

'You are my father. *Tjambuwal* put me in the turtle you cut up today, so that I could find a mother. Where is she?'

[575]

The father points out one of his wives, whom he has been told has ceased menstruating; the child enters her body and starts a terrestrial existence. Next morning the father, if he remembers the dream (the aboriginal men said that it was not often that they did), says to his wife:

9. Myth of *mamariga* wind, Pl. 21b.
10. Myth of *bara* wind, Pl. 21b.
11. Warner (1937), p. 21.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OE17 Muragia OE17

'Last night a *jurtu* came and asked me for a mother, so I sent it to you.' Within a short time the mother shows signs of pregnancy.

In the middle of Pl. 99B is *Tjimbuwal*, holding the spirit child, *jurtu*, by the hand. Over his head are the boomerang-shaped clouds, *wulmu*. The groups of curving cross-hatched panels on the upper edge and the left-hand side of the painting are rain clouds, *b*, the home of the spirit child. On the right-hand side are two men spearing a turtle inhabited by a *jurtu* and on the left a pregnant woman. The curving cross-hatched lines at *a*, on the extreme right of the painting, represent the water disturbed by the wounded creature.

(ii) *The Conception Beliefs of the Jiritja Moiety*

The conception beliefs of the *jiritja* moiety vary somewhat from those of the *dua*. They believe that when a woman ceases to menstruate her blood goes into the sky and is there changed into a spirit child, *jurtu*. After some time the little *jurtu*, desiring an earthly mother, creates a thunderstorm and a rainbow, and, using the raindrops as a vehicle of travel, descends to the earth. If the *jurtu* falls into the sea, it enters some *jiritja* creature such as a dugong, a hawksbill turtle or a queen fish; if on the land, a hive of *jiritja* honey, *kamon* or *barangit*, or the body of some *jiritja* creature. Should the aborigines spear a dugong and find that it is particularly fat, or locate a hive well stocked with honey, they know that the dugong or the hive is inhabited by a spirit child.

When, for example, the dugong is cut open, and the *jurtu* escapes, it visits the sleeping father and asks him which of his wives is to be his mother. As with the *dua* moiety, the father points out a wife who has ceased menstruating. The child enters her body through the vulva. If the father remembers next morning he tells the expectant mother about his dream. Soon afterwards the woman feels the movements of the *jurtu* within her body. As soon as a woman ceases to menstruate, she must not eat meat or fish. Her diet is limited to grass-seeds, yams, the fruit of the cycad, shell-fish and crabs.

On Pl. 99C the father and pregnant mother are at the upper edge of the painting. On either side of them are large thunder-clouds created by the spirit child, *jurtu*. On the right of the painting is falling rain, parallel lines of cross hatching, and on the extreme left two dugongs; the cross-hatching around them is the sea. The U-shaped symbol is a rainbow created by the little *jurtu*, at the base of which is one who has descended on the raindrops. He is swimming about in the sea, waiting for an opportunity to enter the body of one of the dugongs which, he hopes, will be captured by the men in the canoe.[12] The artist explained that he had made a mistake in not allowing himself enough room to paint the dugong in the canoe with the spirit child inside of it. So he painted the *jurtu* only.

12. The *mutu*, like the *muti* of the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia, are, before they enter the mother, complete, self-directing beings. Mountford and Harvey (1941), p. 159.

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OI17 Murngin OI17

Spiritual Entities and Creation

Mali and Birrimbirr

[774] 775 Man is believed to possess two spiritual entities, the "Mali," or lesser spirit, and the "Birrimbirr," or spirit proper. When a person dies, the Mali for a time inhabits the accustomed haunts of the deceased, and then returns to the spirit centre of the [778] particular horde. Every one of these spirit centres includes a pool or spring of water, generally with trees and shrubs surrounding it, and the Mali is believed to enter either into the water or into one of the trees growing beside it. If one of these trees should be destroyed, it is believed that disaster will follow, for the destruction of the tree is regarded as equivalent to the destruction of the one whose Mali resides within it.

775 787 These Mali, or spirits, are believed to be reborn in successive generations of the people. The Mali comes to a man in a dream and says to him, "I want my mother." "Where shall I find my mother?" The man, still in the dream, replies, "Your mother is there," and directs it to his wife. The Mali enters the woman, and later on is reborn into the life of the tribe. Always, when a man so dreams, he passes through some peculiar experience, the significance of which is not realised until afterwards.

For example, a man known to me was one day looking for food along the beach when he saw a fish of a rare, deep-sea variety floating in a most unusual way. This fish he captured and took back to the camp, where he recounted to his companions the circumstances under which he had found it. Other men present refused to partake of it, professing that they were not hungry. This man himself did, and then lay down and slept. While he slept he dreamed that a child spirit came to him in the manner indicated, but he did not associate the two facts until later, when he realised that his wife was to give birth to a child. He was then told by the other men who had been present on the previous occasion that they had refused to eat the fish because they knew

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OI17 Murngin OI17

775 it was not an ordinary fish, but was being used by the child spirit
● 787 as a means of approaching its prospective father.

774 The Mali is shared by man with the whole of the lesser creation. Every living creature, every tree, the very ground itself has its Mali. There can be no existence apart from this spiritual quality.

775 After death the Birrimbirr, or spirit proper, is believed to pass on to Buralkor, the spirit world, which is believed to exist on this world plane away beyond the sun-rising. In this world there are two regions, one good, the other bad, but the spirit's ultimate destination is in no sense determined on ethical grounds. Reaching Buralkor, the spirit once again becomes clothed in physical form, and life goes on as it is lived here.

Creation

773 In the dim dawn days of the world, previous to the existence
776 of men and women as they are found to-day, the world was peopled by a race of semi-human, semi-animal creatures, who were intimately concerned with the origin of the social and ceremonial life of the people. Some of the descendants of these creatures developed into purely animal forms, and others into humans, and many of the "bungals," or open ceremonies, of the people consist of a dramatic recounting of their doings. Behind these there existed certain demi-gods, who were the agents of creation and the ancestors of the present tribal groups. From them the various ceremonial totems were received, and by them the social organisation was established.

Back of these again is the hazy conception of a great spirit known as "Wungarr," by whom the actual agents of creation are believed to have been commissioned and sent forth. The term "Wungarr" is also applied to the dream days of pre-history. By far the most important of these beliefs are those which centre round "Kaitchalan," who is conceived of as a great serpent inhabiting a pool in the upper reaches of the Woolen River. This great creature is believed to have devoured two women who were the most important of the agents of creation, so usurping their powers, and making himself the originator of tribal organisation, social laws and customs, and ceremonial life.

776 Although regarded as in a special sense the ancestor of a certain totemic group of hordes, the power and influence of Kaitchalan are recognised and accepted by all divisions of the tribe.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

which then has to be quickened. The coastal Arnhem Landers have had centuries of contact, and it may be that the usually accepted Aboriginal doctrine of conception has been modified here. In any case, granting the premises, the form in which they hold it is eminently logical. 114 842 796

Amongst the many other interesting points raised by the author is the vital significance of dreams, particularly for ritual and its interpretation. One of Mr. Berndt's important contributions to the anthropology of northern Arnhem Land is his systematic recording of dreams—a sign of the confidence put in him by the natives, and also a sign of the objectivity with which they regard dreams. 114 123 787

One last point: Mr. Berndt lays stress on the importance of the ritual rôle played by women in this region. He is correct in doing so. Though they are not on the "Mother Place", yet they are nearby playing their part, a part which stems from the Dreamtime, when the sacred ritual was theirs; and how else could it be, for life and birth is through the womb? A cult of the Great Mother would have no foundation apart from the women through whom her children must be born. Women here have their sacred aspect and sacred rôle. 114 562 796

The Author and the Field

Mr. R. M. Berndt was well equipped for doing research into the religion of Arnhem Land. After study in the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney, he with his wife (Catherine H. Berndt), also an Anthropologist, did four years of field research amongst Aborigines in both tribal and detribalized conditions. This included about eighteen months on the south-west of Arnhem Land and on the border of the Kimberley Division of Western Australia, where he was introduced to the cult. In 1946 when the Australian National Research Council was able to make a further grant to these workers, we selected the north-eastern corner of Arnhem Land as the main field. Research there would be complementary to what Dr. Warner had done eighteen years before; in addition it was an area subject to the spread of native customs and rites from both the west and the south, and was also likely to show some cultural effects arising from long contact with Macassans or others who visited the region to engage in marine industry. Finally, although a Mission had been operating at Yirrkalla for nearly ten years and an Air Force base had been established there during the war, causing some modification of native life, in particular, lessening the degree of nomadism, yet in spite of this, the fundamental drives and beliefs had not been affected. Men in the prime of life as well as the old men still belonged to the "old order". It was, therefore, still possible to study the native religion in its cultural and social setting as a functioning institution. Fortunately, I was able to assure myself of this during a visit and inquiries in the region in 1946. 114 121 [122] [797] [177]

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

CHAPTER VI

KUNAPIPI DREAMS

Kunapipi ritual and ideology, like all other aspects of native life and thought, find expression through the medium of dreams. The study of these requires not only personal acquaintance with the individuals whose dreams are recorded, but also sound knowledge of their cultural and traditional background. Their behaviour patterns must be compared with those of other representatives of the group; all social factors likely to contribute towards a particular dream should be analysed, and the individual's personality and psychological approach taken into consideration. In addition, the natives' own theory and interpretations of dreams must be considered.

For several months, at Yirrkalla, the dreams of a number of adult males were recorded daily. During the initial period of field-work, it was necessary to have approximately thirty male informants, each chosen for some specific reason; one was a headman of a certain linguistic group, another an artist, a wood-carver, a song-man, a leader of the Djanggawul or of the Kunapipi rituals, and so on. With such a group readily available it was convenient to record their dreams each morning while studying their social background. At the same time an intimacy grew up between the field-worker and the informants, so that mental reservations were reduced to a minimum. Detailed case-histories of each individual were compiled over the period of work, and the sequence of events within the social group was observed in relation to their dreams; these events were apparently modified or accentuated according to a man's peculiar background and associations. What had begun as a tentative experiment developed into an important aspect of study, which revealed the natives' psychological adjustment to their society under the impact of Misson and European contact. However, it was found necessary after a certain period to restrict the time spent on this work, since it had shown a tendency to dominate, and even in part to exclude, other aspects of equal if not greater importance.

It was however of great value to have this opportunity of studying hundreds of dreams, recorded in sequence, of a number of these aborigines, and to observe the wide range of subjects concerned, together with the themes which reflected each man's particular

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

124 approach to life. The dreams ranged from long mundane narratives,
159 relating food-collecting exploits, to matters of sacred concern,
sexual adventures, feuds and fighting, spirits, Spirit-Landings (refer-
● 787 ring to the conception of a wife or some female relative), sickness and
death, and dreams reflecting Mission contact, showing conflict
between the indigenous and the introduced culture. The most import-
ant of these were those of Mission contact, contrasting the native
religion with Christianity, and introducing fantastic conceptions of
God, Jesus and the missionaries. On the other hand, a great many of
these dreams were concerned primarily with indigenous religion, and
it is these dreams that have assumed great importance to the natives
themselves. Men "dream out" the meanings of their sacred ritual,
coming spiritually into direct contact with the Ancestral Beings.
They perform the rituals in dreams, use sacred emblems in uncon-
ventional ways, and also dream additions to their rituals and
totemic designs, additions, of course, based on traditional patterns.
Many sacred designs are altered and added to because of dreams,
although the original totemic pattern is retained. Sacred songs, too,
are influenced directly and indirectly by dreaming; for the Ancestral
Being who has inspired a particular song-cycle may suggest an
addition or modification to a headman during a dream.

124 The natives' own interpretation of their dreams, apart from those
787 which have a bearing on the sacred life, varies considerably. It may
159 reflect a man's brooding over an event, or thinking about someone:
"I was thinking about such and such, and dreamt this"; "I was
828 worrying about so and so and dreamt about them"; "My child is
sick, and I dreamt this" (often something apparently quite unrelated
to the supposed "cause" of dreaming). A death in the camp will
inspire most men and women to dream about the deceased's spirit,
about some other death (in the past or the future), about mortuary
ceremonies, clan songs and the Spirit Lands of the dead.

A man's dissatisfaction with his marital arrangements will be expressed through a series of sexual dreams, while an elopement in the camp will produce dreams relating to feuds and fighting, quarrels and arguments, or allegoric dreams through which such events are said to be mirrored. Other dreams portend future events. But when camp life is running smoothly, involved dreams of a secular or sacred nature are interpreted as, "I was hungry last night and dreamt that"; or, "I was worrying over some tobacco"; or, "Someone stole my supper"; and so on. These interpretations, as for the Kunapipi dreams which follow, are often put forward irrespective of the context of the dream. The performance of large ceremonies like the *dua* and *jiritja naru*, the Wauwalak rituals and the like, when the whole camp participates, produces among both men and women a crop of dreams that relate mainly to the relevant rituals, although a mass of contradictory interpretative material is put forward.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
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Dreams are rarely "extraordinary"[1] when they occur in Yirrkalla life; they are related to the ordinary round of events, and are definitely not placed in the category of the supernatural. They are an adjunct of normal and conventional living; and just as a man's body and spirit have experiences in the waking life, so the spirit (separated now from material ties) has similar experiences (within the range of an individual's knowledge) in the dreaming sphere, where time and space are ignored. The aborigines' theory is that the spirit, during sleep, is released from the body, and during a dream wanders in timeless space, into the stream of the Eternal Dreamtime.

* * * *

We may turn now to our main theme, the Kunapipi dreams, for the general question of Yirrkalla dream life requires a separate study.

Only three Kunapipi dreams will be considered here: these, among the many hundreds of dreams recorded, were the only ones really relevant to this discussion. Most of those dreams which referred to sacred and ceremonial aspects were associated with other Wauwalak rituals, like the *djunggawon* and *ngu:rlmak*, but more particularly with the "higher" sacred emblems and ritual of Djanggawul, Laintjung and Banaitja and so on. The reason for this paucity of Kunapipi dreams is possibly that this cult has not as yet a really firm grip of the people's minds, as have more typically indigenous forms. It consists, as we have said, of introduced ritual superimposed on traditional mythology, and from that consideration alone would not be so deeply ingrained in the culture as other and far older local rituals. On the other hand, the three dreams set out here were inspired by lengthy conversations on various aspects of the Kunapipi. Later, when certain Kunapipi ceremonies were in operation, and a great many people of both sexes were brought into the sphere of its influence, it was not possible to record dreams. We may assume, however, that the performance of the Kunapipi would produce related dreaming; for while other ceremonies were being held, it was found that all those concerned invariably had relevant dreams. An important adjunct in the study of native religious life should be the analysis of informants' and participants' dreams; this should not be confined to one sex alone, for we have shown elsewhere the important part played by women, particularly in the Fertility cults, and their dreams reflect their approach to ceremonial (as well as to secular) life.

These Kunapipi dreams belonged to two men. One was Banggalawi,[2] a *dua* Djambarpingu *mata*, Ralwia *mala* man, a middle-aged ceremonial headman, well versed in both Djanggawul and Wauwalak ritual, and a leader of the Milingimbi Kunapipi side. The other

1. L. Warner's Appendix on Dreams (*op. cit.* pp. 511-12) is inadequate.
2. The Bengaliwo of L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 68, 182 *et seq.*

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 The other
787 was Gumuk (*vide* Chapter V), an unmarried middle-aged *jiritja*
794 Dalwongu *mata*, Biringal *mala* man, who had homo-sexual tende-
796 cies but did engage in normal sex relations. Most of his attention was
[838] focused on sacred ritual; he was the representative of the Rose River Kunapipi, to the local headmanship of which he aspired. Since we are interested here only in the actual context of the dreams, as an aid to amplifying our previous chapter on ritual, we will not set out the case histories of these men; this would be necessary only if we were analysing fully the dream sequences of each man over the full period of recording. Both these informants were able men, fully acquainted with all aspects of Kunapipi ritual, and qualified to interpret its symbols and conventional expressions.

First comes the translation of Banggalawi's dream.[3]

"I was dreaming about Kunapipi. We had gone out to the sacred ground, where we made a *kunala* (the *ba'uma* of Chapter IV). We opened the veins of our arms and poured the blood into a large shell, and began to stick eagle-hawk down around our waists. When we had finished decorating, we *dua* men got up and 'took dancing' for those *gulwiri* palms.

3. Reference: Book 18, Series A, Feb. 5th, 1947, R.B.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
O117 Murngin O117

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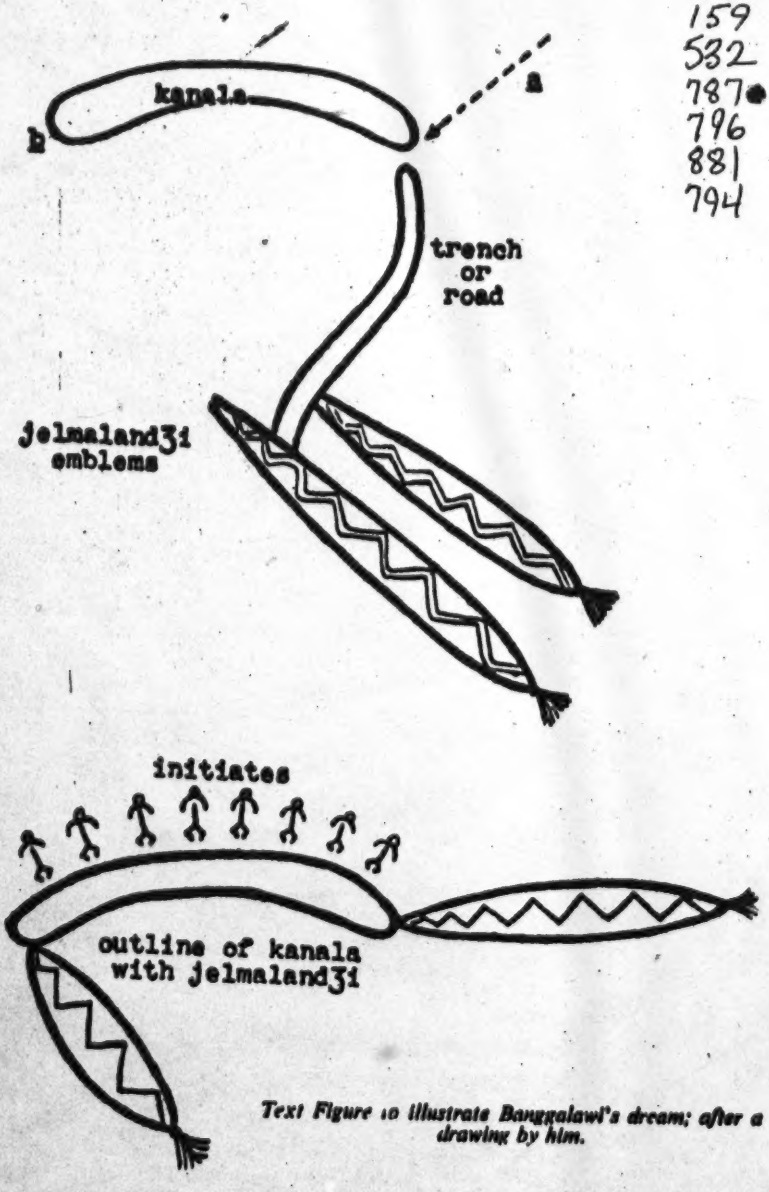

Text Figure 10 illustrate Banggalawi's dream; after a drawing by him.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
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159 "We, that is Mo:ra (a *dua* Dadawi *mata*, Kapin *mala* man),
● 787 Mo:ra's young brother (dead), some other *dua* men, and I 'walked'
796 (along *a* in text figure 8), paused, and shook the branches tied to our forearms; we went on into the *kanala*, and huddled together. While in there, we called out twice; then we came out, and stood alongside the *kanala* (at *b*).

"Then we returned to the main camp and slept.

"Next morning, we went back to the sacred ground and the *kanala*, and re-decorated ourselves with blood and feather down. Then we 'took' new 'spring' water dancing, and came into the main part of the ground (along *a*), shaking our branches, and 'going inside' the *kanala*. We sang out from in there, and emerged (at *b*). Then we danced the Lightning Snake and the Yellow Snake, going into the *kanala* each time. When we had finished these, we rested.

"After that we walked down the 'road' (or trench, at *c*), until we reached a group of *jiritja* men standing round the *jelmalandji*. All the *jiritja* moved back (to *a*) and 'took' opossum dancing; they came (down *a*) and began to dance around the *kanala*, 'rubbing it out so nobody could see'. They kept on dancing until it was completely covered, and then went over and stood by the *jelmalandji*.

159 "They carried the *jelmalandji* over to what had been the *kanala*, and
787 placed one at each end, standing them upright in the ground (as in
796 the lower part of the illustrated text figure marked 2). All the young
981 boys who were initiates were then brought on to the ground; the *dua* boys, *muru*, came in one bunch, and the *jiritja* boys, *wuri* (or *wurli*), came in another bunch. They were placed on one side (the convex side) of the *kanala*, and told to lie down as if they were asleep: men covered them with blankets. They had not seen the *jelmalandj* when they were brought in, for their guardians had their hands held over the boys' eyes.

"Then we sang for a while and danced, until our singing changed; I was leading the singing, beating on my sticks. We threw off the boys' coverings, and told them to look up at the *jelmalandji*. We showed them these sacred posts, and sang and danced all night till just before sunrise. When the sun was getting up, we opened our veins again and let out blood. And this blood we smeared all over the boys' bodies, and over the men. Then we put *marapipi* bands on their foreheads. We smeared more blood over the boys.

"We undid their *naga* (loin cloths) and put bark-fibre from the
[291] *duramggulp* 'coffee' tree around their waists, and branches of green leaves in front like a pubic apron. We plucked *malpi*, ironwood tree, branches and tied them on the boys' arms at the elbows and shoulders, on their thighs and on their legs below the knees. We sang over them as we do in the Kunapipi.

"When they were all ready, we took them to the *djepalmani* (that is, *djepalmandji*) that had been erected on the edge of the main camp,

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

on the way to the sacred ground, and we put those boys under the branches and covered them up. The *jiritja* men were sitting in the forks of the *djepalmani*, and calling out. I was walking around beating my sticks and singing. 159 787 796

"The women came towards the *djepalmani* and sat around it. And the two *jiritja* men were calling out, because that Snake had swallowed the Wauwalak sisters. 881

"And just at that moment, we all became *wonga:r* Dreaming people. All the women who had been sitting there, around the *djepalmani*, had been swallowed by the Snake; for the *jelmalandji* had come down from the sacred ground and turned into Julunggul. Some of us who were *wonga:r* were brothers of the women who had been swallowed. We brothers were looking around for our sisters: 'Where have our sisters gone?' We began to cry out, 'Where are you, our sisters?' And as we were calling, the Julunggul, or *jelmalandji*, vomited all the women so that they fell back into the places where they had been sitting around the *djepalmani*. And the white ants came up to them and bit them and made them alive. 'Ah, our sisters are back,' we cried out. And we changed back from being *wonga:r* people, and we began to sing out ritually because of this.

"We said to the women, 'Look at our *djepalmani*. See the flying foxes sitting in the forks of the tree: they are hanging there. And that rail across from one forked post to the other is a straight branch; and under that straight branch, all the young flying foxes are hanging covered with foliage'. (These are the initiates holding on to the rail under cover of branches, beneath the *djepalmani*.)

"And I came into this cleared place in front of the women and the *djepalmani*, calling out like a man coming after those flying foxes, hunting them, shaking the forked posts as I would shake a tree full of flying foxes. That means that these flying foxes see me and fly over from that tree. And the two men in the forks, who were flying foxes, cried out from their branches; and all the other men danced in, like men coming to hunt the flying foxes.

"All the women changed back to *wonga:r* women and became the Wauwalak sisters; only these were not two, but many. They held yam sticks, just like the Wauwalak sisters did. They cried out for the boys in the *djepalmani*, '*wa ! wa ! wa !*' and the sound of it flew in all directions. Then we men danced in again and circled around them and the *djepalmani*. But just as we began to dance, I awoke".

The informant commented that he dreamt this Kunapipi dream because he had been talking a lot about the Kunapipi rituals and the *ngu:rlmak* (some ceremonies in the latter concern flying foxes); he had been thinking and worrying about them, wondering when they could be held, and so his dream was a natural outcome of this. [828]

The dream itself needs little interpretation, for its description of the ritual varies little from what has already been described. The 159 787 796

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 787 796 destruction of the *kanala* before the showing of the *jelmalandji* to the initiates is an unusual feature, while the performance of ceremonial copulation which should have taken place after the *jelmalandji* ritual and before the *djepalmani* was omitted altogether. The real meaning of the *djepalmani* (*djepalmandji*) with its forked sticks is not mentioned, since it is identified as the tree in which flying foxes hang. This is the usual way in which the men try to "trick" the women, to hide the real meaning (see description of ritual in Chapter IV). But Banggalawi stressed this aspect, owing to his concern about the *ngu:rlmak* flying fox rituals, which for various reasons had not been held for several years.

The most interesting aspect of the dream is the transposition of the characters, together with Banggalawi himself, from contemporary to *wonga:r* beings. The *jelmalandji*, which are really Julunggul in spirit form, become the *wonga:r* Python who swallows the women, just as Julunggul swallowed the Wauwalak in the myth. Banggalawi identifies himself and the other characters in the dream as being participants in the Wauwalak myth: it is no longer ritual, but actual *wonga:r* happening, and they themselves are the *wonga:r*. Then they change back to ordinary people performing the Kunapipi. Towards the end of the dream the women revert to *wonga:r*, and are the Wauwalak themselves—not just the Two Sisters of the myth, but dozens of female counterparts, who are all Wauwalak. This aspect of a person's absolute identification with the Ancestral or Totemic Beings is not uncommon, nor found only in the realm of dreams. On the sacred ground, when actors perform totemic dances, it is said that the spirit of the totem (or Ancestral Being) enters the neophytes and they become possessed; during the period of a man's dancing he is the sacred being, for his whole personality is absorbed by that of the *wonga:r*. It is this type of identification which takes place in the above dream.

The next dream is Gumuk's.[4]

4. Reference: Book 18, Series A, Feb. 3rd, 1947, R.B.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
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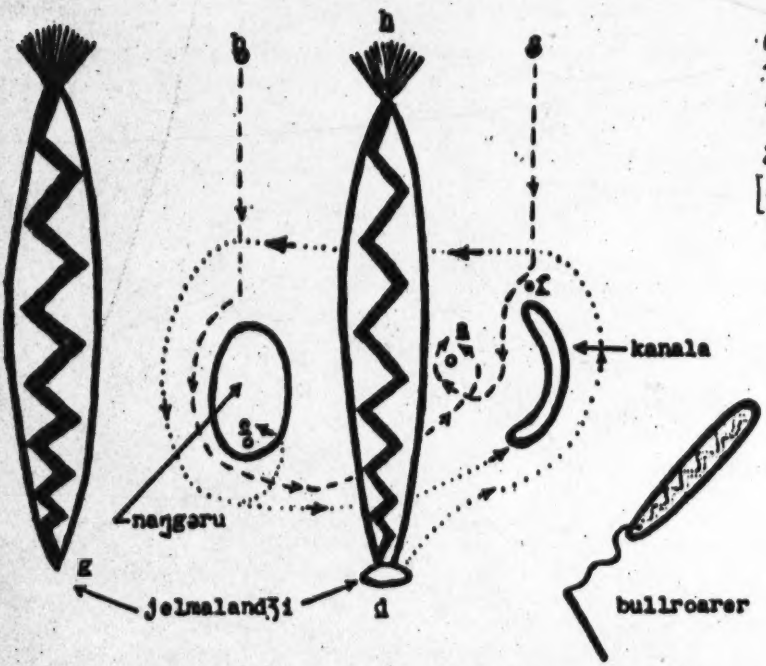

Text Figure 9 to illustrate a dream by Gumuk: after a drawing by him.

"I was dreaming Kunapipi side. I was standing (at *a*, in text figure 9 illustrated here) in the sacred ground, calling out; twice I called out. When I had finished, a lot of men and young boys (that is, initiates) came down the ground. They came in two lines (*b* and *c*), both being *ngulkaru* (that is, 'strangers' or Kunapipi visitors), and among the men were the *wari* (*jiritja* initiates). One lot (*b*) came down and around the *nanggaru* billabong, while the other lot (*c*) moved down past the *kanala* 'river' (that is, uterus trench) and surrounded me (at *a*). The *wari* went down to *d* below the *jelmalandji*, and were covered up by the old men ('the people who look after the sacred grounds'). You see the *jelmalandji* in my drawing (that is text figure 9), well, that is Julunggul swallowing the young boys; you see it rising up above them. In my dream the *jelmalandji* is 'alive' like that big Snake.

"Over by the *nanggaru* (at *e*) was standing Djuwalji (a *jiritja* Gumaitj *mata* man). And as the people surrounded me (at *a*), I walked over (to *f*) and stood there on one end of the *kanala* mound. From there I sang out for all that lot below the *jelmalandji* (at *d*); they moved forward (out of Julunggul) and encircled the *kanala* and

159 the *nanggaru*; some went into the *nanggaru*, and others went on and
•787 into the *kanala*. All the men with the young initiates called out, when
796 they paused now and then on their way to the *kanala* and *nanggaru*;
881 and they all made a big noise while standing there.

"Then the men danced around the *kanala* and *nanggaru*, but did not go into them. They danced the 'Lightning whipping (that is, striking) the tree', which we call the *djamala*; but it is also called by the sacred terms *djeimbalma*, *gurungandungandu*, *w'raidji'kaijunduna*, *kokarara*, and *kanggarara*, which mean the flash of lightning striking and splitting the tree. While we danced, the *dua* men swung the bullroarers, which we call *maralpan(dji)*, *pundjarlari* and *kindji:lari*, while its human hair string attachment (the tail of the Snake) is *jurawa*, *mikara*, *libana* or *djuruwalimbana*. The bullroarer is like the Snake [749] himself calling, for when you swing it, twirling it from the stick to which the cord is attached, you send lightning all over the place.

"Then we called and sang the sacred names of the *kanala*: [539] '*kanala ; kanala'indja ; ju:tubilmani ; kanu:lanawalkwalkgwina; Kanala'buldjalwondinja ; kanala'djeijil'malindjei ; kanala'madpaindi:nja; kanala'buramanbir*' (e.g. see Chapter VII, Song 3).

"We turned to the *nanggaru*, the Snake's hole, to the place where Djuwalji was standing (at *e*), which was the mark made by the Snake when it came out of the *nanggaru*. And we called and sang the sacred names of the *nanggaru*: '*nanggaru ; wuninbilibaija ; wa:ngnanggu ; baiala; djalpunbu; wandi:ku; buldjalwondi; winibini:nbailji ; buldjalwondinja*—the nest in which the Snake lies.'

"We turned to the two *jelmalandji*, the Snake towering over the place where the initiates had been lying, and the "cabbage" palm at *g*. And we called and sang their sacred names:

" '*kanggara ; dju:randju:ran'kanggara ; gumanangaleija'anga-* [539] *leija ; gumanangali:tjbili:tjbi ; gumana'wu:rulndja'wu:rulndja ; ru:-kari ; windigwi:agwi:a'windigwi:agwi:a ; djalparu'ru:karwa ; bu:ra:-rwa ; wuraldja ; gumalanga'ngeidjangeidja ; gumanang'ngali'djili:-dji ; windigwi:agwi:a'djanggara.*' (This last word is chanted when the Kunapipi headman beats his sticks as the *jelmalandji* are pushed over.) And we pushed down the *jelmalandji*, so that the *watamunu*, [616] the emu-feathered tops, fell off. The main *jelmalandji* (*h*) was for the *dua* linguistic groups of Marakulu and Ri:radjingu; while the other (*g*) was for the Murungun, Djapu and Djarwak, *dua* groups.

"As the bullroarer was swung, its string broke, and the loose piece of wood flew over and hit a *durilji* gum tree: the impact was so powerful that the tree split, and pieces fell to each side. Then we walked over to pick up the bullroarer, and as I bent down I awoke."

[828] Gumuk said that anger was the cause of this dream: he had cooked some rice for his supper, leaving it on the fire. When he came back for it, it was gone; someone had stolen it. He was "a bit sorry for himself, because he had been cooking just for nothing". He went to

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

sleep feeling hungry, and dreamt about this Kunapipi. That is, he went back to his "Dreaming" for consolation.

Most of this dream too consists of description of ritual, but not in conventional sequence. Some interesting aspects appear, which amplify our previous discussion of the Kunapipi. There is complete identification of the *jelmalandji* with the Julunggul Snake. But Gumuk re-interpreted the *kanala* and *nanggaru* in commenting on his dream. He said that the *nanggaru* was actually the "Mother's" (that is, the Wauwalak's) uterus, while the *kanala* was the channel ("river") or passage of the vagina, "through which people passed in the Dreaming" (that is, during the period when the Wauwalak walked the earth). He was possibly interpolating here his own theory as to the meaning of these symbols, for usually the *kanala* is the uterus and the *nanggaru* the place of the big Snake. This individual interpretation, however, is extremely valuable; for it is far more logical to classify the *nanggaru*, which is round or oval, as a uterus, and the *kanala*, narrow and resembling a channel, as a vagina. Gumuk's reference to people passing through the *kanala* in the "Dreaming period", is connected with the idea that the Mother "let out" people from her womb, so that they could perform sacred ritual, returning when this was completed. This aspect is not apparent in Yirrkalla mythology; Gumuk possibly assimilated it from Rose River, where Kunapipi ritual has a stronger hold of the people's imagination and sacred activity, and where it is more likely to be influenced by external features.

The calling of the sacred alternate names for the Lightning dancing, the bullroarer and its string, the *kanala* and *nanggaru*, as well as for the *jelmalandji*, has not been mentioned before in our discussion. The concept is found, however, in the calling of the *bukali* (*dua*) or *bukalilji* (*jiritja*), or "power" names of invocation, and some of these are widely distributed. The use of the term *djamala*, in reference to the "Lightning whipping" dance, is equivalent to the *djamala mareiin* mentioned in Chapter IV, which consists of the throwing of fire-sticks; both refer to the Snake's sending lightning so that a tree was split and the Wauwalak were frightened. The climax of Gumuk's dream is the breaking of the bullroarer's string while it is being twirled: it flies through the air and splits a tree, but is itself undamaged. This symbolizes Julunggul's act of sending lightning to split a tree, for the bullroarer "is like the Snake" (that is, part of its spirit), and its whirling "like lightning". It is the natural culmination of the *djamala* dancing around the *nanggaru* and *kanala*.

The final dream also belongs to Gumuk.[5]

"I have been dreaming about Kunapipi, and two 'Dreaming' men

5. Reference: Book 12, Series A, Dec. 27th, 1946.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

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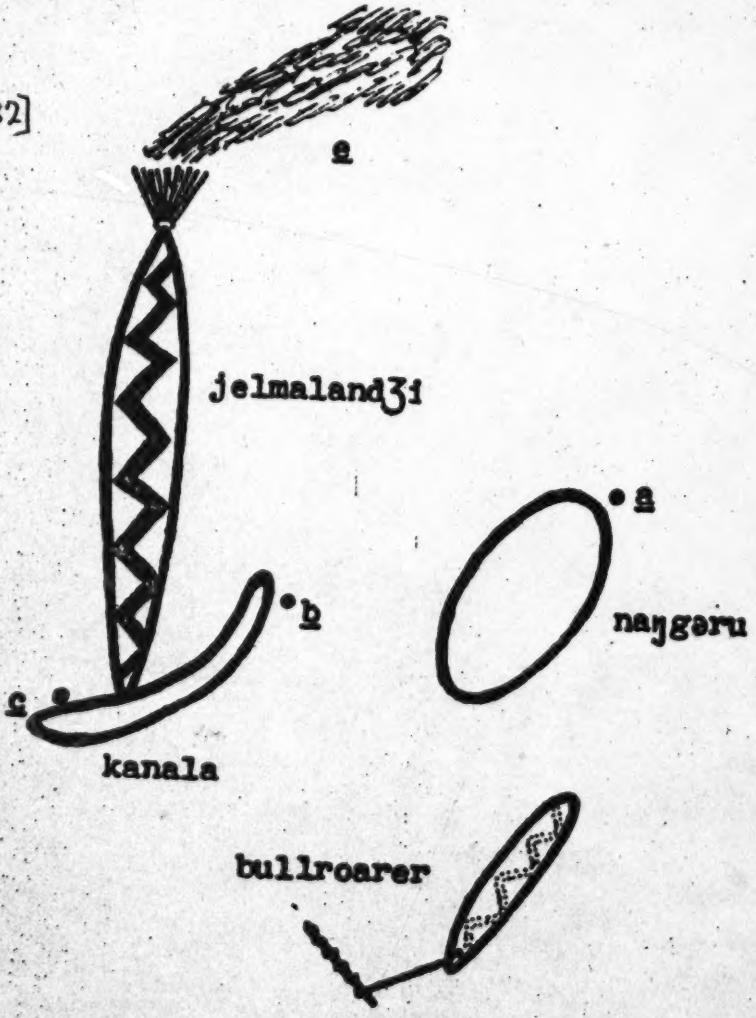
who were *kakawar* (that is, visiting strangers to the Kunapipi ceremonies).

"I came along with the *kakawar* through the bush, calling out at

[532]



Text Figure 10 *to illustrate Gumuk's second dream: after a drawing by him*

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

intervals, until we entered the sacred ground where the *nanggaru*, the *kanala*, and one *jelmalandji* were ready. 159 787 796

"One *kakawar* stood (at *a*, in the accompanying sketch figure, 10) outside the *nanggaru* billabong, and the other (at *b*) outside the *kanala* "river"; and they called out. I stood (at *c*) beside the *kanala*. We then rested, while the two *kakawar* made the human-hair cord for the bullroarer (*d*); then one of these men (at *a*) covered his face with leaves, all hanging down from his headband.

"We called out again, and looked over towards the *jelmalandji*, standing upright alongside the *kanala*. From out of its bunch of emu feathers, we saw smoke rising: billows of smoke (*e*) coming from the top of the *jelmalandji*, but no fire. We took hold of the *jelmalandji* and placed it in the *kanala* 'river', which is really the Wauwalak's vagina. We put it in the trench, lying down, like a big penis. Then we danced around the *kanala*, 'taking' opossum dancing, pushing in the mound until the *jelmalandji* was buried and the *kanala* covered.

"After resting, the two *kakawar* men got the bullroarer, which had been left in the *nanggaru*; they attached the cord to a stick, wound it up, and swung it, and there was a big noise. All the women in the main camp answered it; and other men appeared, and erected a *djepalmandji* between the sacred ground and the main camp. The three of us came down towards it, and saw all the young boys hidden under the framework, and the women sitting in a bunch covered with blankets. And as I looked, I awoke". [534]

Gumuk mentioned that he had this Kunapipi dream because he was worrying about getting some tobacco to smoke. He was worrying and thinking about this, and dropped off to sleep and dreamt this dream. [828]

As in the last two dreams, the incidents mentioned refer to actual Kunapipi ritual. Gumuk did not try to interpret the smoking *jelmalandji*; but it seems most likely that his desire for tobacco, in order to smoke before sleeping, has been thus projected into the dream. It is not unusual for a secular activity of this kind to appear in dreams devoted mainly to sacred subjects. On the sacred ground itself, tobacco is considered *mareiin* (sacred) and may be smoked only by the Kunapipi headman (or other ceremonial leader) and the elders, although others may step outside the ground and enjoy a smoke in the normal way. In view of this, it does not seem necessary to search for an esoteric reason for the smoking *jelmalandji*; it is possible, too, in a ritualistic sense, for Gumuk to identify himself with the *jelmalandji* (irrespective of the sex of the Julunggul).

Gumuk reiterated his view that the *kanala*, a "river", is really the Wauwalak's vagina. The *jelmalandji* symbolizes the penis, which is removed from its upright position and placed in the *kanala* "like a big penis", just as happens in coitus. The opossum dancing around the *kanala* is, as has been mentioned, concerned with simulation of [831]

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 the sexual act, while the covering of the *kanala* and the *jelmalandji* 787 signifies the complete insertion of the penis. This, of course, conforms 796 to what is believed to be the underlying intent of the Kunapipi [831] ritual and the Wauwalak mythology; through fertilization by the penis (symbolized by the Snake), the Wauwalak (representing the Fertility Mother) becomes the source of fecundity for human, animal and other species.

The last phase of the dream refers to the final Kunapipi ceremony, in which the *djepalmandji* is used. This rite, signifying rebirth, is a normal outcome of the above ceremony; for from the symbolic act of coitus "someone or something will be born", and in the Kunapipi it is the initiates who emerge from their experience like new people.

* * * *

159 These three dreams serve to amplify our discussion of Kunapipi 787 ritual, and stress its inter-relationship with the basic Wauwalak 121 theme. Some new features are introduced, such as the re-interpretation of the *kanala* and *nanggaru*; but this does not fundamentally alter the conventional intent of Kunapipi ceremonies.

There is possibly a recognized pattern in Kunapipi dreams, over and above descriptive details of its rituals, which may be modified or exaggerated according to individual inclination or personal response. Definite patterns are found in dreams relating to other aspects of Wauwalak mythology or Djanggawul ritual, or to matters of alien contact. Much field work however has yet to be done in the realm of psychological reaction to indigenous (and introduced) religious phenomena.

[pp. 85-203 not processed]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

ceremonial exchange system. Besides weapons and fishing lines, the heavier types of rope as well as most of the larger fishing nets, are made by men. In the coastal groups where bark canoes are used, the making of these craft is also the work of the men. In the case of dugout canoes, a man either makes his own canoe, a long and laborious task taking weeks or months of time and requiring a good deal of intensive hard work, or he employs a craftsman to make it for him, in which case he assumes the responsibility for the organisation of the work and for the payments involved. The large, coarsely woven fish traps, which may be five or six feet, or even more, in length, as well as other paraphernalia associated with fishing, are usually made by the men, although women may also assist.

How subtle may be the driving force which induces the natives to work, is shown by the following example. During the south-east or dry season the people rarely build houses, but are content with breakwinds, until the north-west or wet season. Even then they generally delay the work of gathering bark and other necessary building materials until the actual onset of the rains. During a patrol at the beginning of the north-west when we were debating as to whether a heavy storm that threatened was really about to break, one of the natives said "*ŋärru tobitj*",[13] "my muscles have twitched", (and therefore it will not rain). And such is the belief of the natives in these portents that the people would not go out and collect the necessary paperbark to make a proper camp, despite the threatening sky.

[13] Muscular twitching, called *tobitj*, is an omen or portent which is believed to give warning of a forthcoming event, or to foretell the approach of an enemy or a visitor. The part of the body in which the twitching occurs indicates the relationship in which the visitor stands to the person who receives the warning.

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

Sometimes a man and a woman run away because they like each other too much. This is a bad thing. Marriages should be arranged properly and people should do things that we do here when things are right. No one here likes runaway marriages. When people like each other too much it always makes trouble for all their relatives and for them (pages 86-88).

Some women stay no good. A man can give them a good hiding and what do they do? They go straight away and look for a new sweetheart. They are all the same as someone with an evil spirit in their heads.

HIS CHILDREN

When my son was born, I was very happy. Many moons before I had come back from a Djungguan python dance. I went to sleep by my campfire and had a dream. In the dream the spirit child came to me and said, "I am bringing something from Wongar to you. I am looking for my mother." I said to him, "Where do you come from?"

He said, "I came from your totem well. I am bringing a barrimundi fish for you" (pages 67-69).

I got up and walked around in the morning time. I went down close to the water along the beach. I saw a large barrimundi floating on the water. When he came close up, the tide threw this fish right up on the sand bank. I looked at him. His tail was moving. I thought quickly, "Oh, this one is from that dream." That fish was all the same as dead when I came up close. I took my spear-thrower, hooked it inside his mouth, and pulled him all the way along through the water and carried him back to camp. I left him there. I called out to a man. "You come help me," I said. "Come help carry this fish and get a fire ready."

The man said, "You lift him up yourself."

I said, "No, he is too big for me."

We two carried the barrimundi back to camp. We cooked him. One man cooked the liver and tasted it. He said, "It is very sweet and very fat but tastes very different."

I said, "Yes, it is different. I dreamed this one."

We started next day for a ceremony. We danced all night. We danced for over a moon.

Before my daughter came I did not dream at first. One day I was out hunting turtles. I saw a little bird. It was like a little fish in the sea. The little bird flew on one side of me and then the other. I heard him say, "Wheell Wheell" It was all the same as the wind in the trees. I thought then, "This is a spirit after me." I went ashore. I slept and I dreamed. This little bird came to me in the dream and said, "Father, I have come to you. Where is my mother?"

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

I said, "Your mother is here alongside of me." Her mother had not had children yet. We had no family. She was only a young girl. I awakened my wife and told her my dream, for I thought straightaway, "I am going to have a daughter." I said to her, "I dreamed a girl for you." My wife knew then she was going to have a daughter.

After my daughter was born we knew we were going to have a son because I dreamed a son. One moon went by. My wife felt a little bit heavy. She told me. I said, "Yes, that is what I told you before in the dream." A few months later a son was born.

I like my children. If a father and mother do not take care of their sons and daughters all the women everywhere start gossiping about them. They say that they are crazy, that maybe they have an evil spirit in their heads, and they say they are no good. We men talk the same way, too. We do not like to see little children mistreated. My little son is just the same as my spear-thrower. He is just the same as my right arm (page 71). I think it is a good thing for a man to have a lot of children. It makes a lot of people in his tribe. It always gives him, when he gets old, all the things he wants to eat and use for himself. If he has trouble, and all men have trouble, he does not have to go to his mother's people or his wife's people for help. He has it himself. He can take his own sons and fight any people because he is strong. When a man has no sons and no daughters, then when he gets old he can do nothing. We black men like daughters too because when they marry that gives us many wakus and makes us very strong. Good sons-in-law always make many gifts. Good wakus make men proud. We like sons too because nobody can hurt us.

Sometimes people talk out loud in the camp at night, and they say, "Which one did you promise this daughter of yours to?"

I say, "I don't know." I say, "No one." I say, "If I have a sister and she has a son I can't wait any longer then. I must point at that waku [sister's son and son-in-law]. He must get her. But now I must keep quiet. I can't say anything. My sister has no son and I must wait. My little boy's mother has a brother; by and by when he has a daughter, I must go to him and get that girl for my son. That will make everything right and keep our family straight" (pages 65-67).

Mahkarolla as a Friend and a Murngin

Those who believe that the savage has a prerational mentality have not known natives intimately, either because of not being in contact with them or because of the mental barrier of scientific or religious dogma. The larger ideas and more general concepts of primitive people are much the same as our own. They have their philosophers and thinkers, their fools and their

532 131 The drawings in polychrome from north-
756 eastern Arnhem Land that accompany this paper* were made on sheets of stringy bark (*Eucalyptus tetrodonta*) by three medicinemen, called *marngitmirri*, members of Mildjingi clan of the lower Glyde River, and of two neighbouring clans, Liagauwumirr' and Ngalladar
617 Tjambarpoingo. Mildjingi is a clan of *yiritja* moiety and Liagauwumirr' and Tjambarpoingo are members of the opposite moiety, *dua*, in which certain terminal vowels, notably *i* and *o* are elided as an arbitrary mark of distinction
[N7] between clans of different moieties whose members speak similar languages. In Wanguri clan of the Arnhem Bay area the word *kulong* is applied to the medicineman.

776 In each case the figures drawn by the medicineman
● 787 represent the spirits called *marngit*, two or more in number, which adopt certain men, often first subjecting
756 them to an ordeal or series of ordeals, after which they are known as *marngitmirri*—medicinemen—and are vested with the special powers of this cult.

The *marngit* or spirit familiars of two of the three medicinemen from eastern Arnhem Land who claimed to be *marngitmirri* are shown in Plates I and Ja. These *marngit* were said first to have visited the men whom they later adopted, subjecting them to a series of ordeals. Sometimes they brought sickness, in other cases, according to my informants, they inflicted injuries, sometimes actually breaking bones and almost killing the novice, after which they restored him and then invited the initiate in turn to try his own skill by injuring the *marngit* and restoring him. After a more or less lengthy period of trial by way of initiation, the *marngit* finally adopted the *marngitmirri* and thenceforth helped and guided him in the practice of the cult.

756 According to most of my informants, the cult of the *marngitmirri* or medicineman in eastern Arnhem Land is restricted to men only, although it is not a sacred cult and is not secret—that is, it does not depend upon ritual or supernatural backing, and is carried out in open camp without any secrecy, in the presence of women and children. Many of the *marngit*, the spirit familiars them-
[776] selves, were said by my informants to be females. Although women do not appear to become *marngitmirri* they do
[791 practise as rainmakers. Some of the rainmakers of east
562] Arnhem Land, of whom there were three in Mildjingi clan—the clan of Wilindjango—were women, one of whom was renowned for her prowess with the rites and magical spells of the rainmaker. However, although rain-
[788] making depends upon the understanding and correct observance of certain rituals and the use of the appropriate

* *With Plates I and J*

[p. 97 (B)]

or medicine-men. Members of the one, whose operations are wholly of an evil character, are known as *ragalk*, while members of the other, whose operations are always of a benign character, are known as *marngit*, or less frequently *gulang*.'

This statement needs qualification, for the cults of the medicineman or *marngit* and the sorcerer or *kalka* in Arnhem Land are not quite as simple as suggested in this account, and the *marngitmirri*—that is, the medicineman, the man who has been initiated and adopted by spirit familiars called *marngit* who help him in the practice of his cult—really belongs to east Arnhem Land, and to the territory east of the Crocodile Islands, coinciding with the area that lacks a typical tribal organization. The somewhat different cult of the *ragalk* or *kalka*, the sorcerer, flourishes at Cape Stewart and to the south and west of this territory. Its stronghold is central and western Arnhem Land. Here, in the territory of the Burara tribe of Cape Stewart which lies immediately west of the Crocodile Group, and among Raimbar'ngo, Ritar'ngo and other tribes of central Arnhem Land, the cult of the *ragalk* flourishes. An informant of Wanguri clan who was linked by his totemic background with the Wallamango declared that the cult of the *marngit* did occur in the neighbouring Burara tribe. But the account given by this man was not impartial and unavoidably gave to the *marngit* of that area a kind of 'aura' of the *kalka* or sorcerer.

It will be clear from what I have said that the two cults are not complementary, except possibly in the Burara tribe. And in east Arnhem Land they certainly do not exist side by side as opposing cults among the same people, as the Revd. T. T. Webb's account implies. The sorcerer or *kalka*, although certainly known to the people east of the Crocodile Islands who live in the stronghold of the *marngitmirri*, and much feared by them as part of the magical stock-in-trade of the *warnba*, the people of the west (strangers) does not exist as a cult in eastern Arnhem Land. The fear in which the sorcerer is held by these people resulted from the transfer of the Methodist Mission from Elcho Island, where it was first established, to Milingimbi in the Crocodile Islands—which, by coincidence, lies on the western fringe of the territory of the Burara, the very home of the *kalk*'.

The present paper is intended to give an account of the *marngitmirri* and their *marngit* and particularly to describe the way in which a man of east Arnhem Land is visited by his *marngit* and initiated as a 'medicineman,' the relationship that exists between the *marngitmirri* and his *marngit* or spirit familiars, and the way in which his *marngit* or spirit familiars test the medicineman before they adopt him.

The coloured plates (I, J) that accompany the paper, as I have stated, represent the *marngit* drawn by three medicinemen of east Arnhem Land. The descriptions with the plates are translations of the information given to me by the medicinemen themselves, generally in their own languages.

The Kalka *and* Ragalk

After I had been working for about two years in eastern Arnhem Land and knew the language well enough to

753
776 originally by the Djangauwo sisters—women culture
[773] heroes, who, in their progress across east Arnhem Land, thrust their yam sticks into the ground as they walked. From each of the holes caused in this way there gushed a spring of water of a special kind called *milmindjarrk*. Certain tabus restrict the drinking of *milmindjarrk* water and my informant Nyarrang declared that the swelling on his neck was due to ritual punishment in the form of a blow from the *malli* of the heavy *birlma*, used by the Djangauwo sisters whose spirits still preside over *milmindjarrk* waters. Some time later, the effect of the blow from the *malli birlma* had become manifest in the form of a swelling. It is characteristic of these people that when 'something is wrong,' when they receive a warning in the
[787] form of an omen or portent, or when 'bad luck' attends their hunting or fishing expeditions, they look back over their lives for some incident which has caused them
[152] uneasiness or concern and which they feel may have incurred the displeasure of the *malli wangarr*, the spirits of the ancestral culture heroes.

756 The role of the *marrngitmirri* is twofold: first, to diagnose sickness or to determine the cause of death, and secondly
[776] to find a scapegoat by the aid of his *marrngit*—who, being spirits or ghosts, possess occult powers, powers to see
[787] things not visible to mortals, which they communicate to the *marrngitmirri*, who in turn passes the information to the kin of the victim. As a rule the verdict of the *marrngitmirri*
[682 is accepted without question and the people proceed to
593] select an avenger. This will be a person within the kinship horizon of the deceased—sometimes a younger brother but often a more distant relation from a clan to which, under an extension of the kinship structure, he has special obligations, which may be reciprocal.

In the marginal area adjacent to the Burara, *i.e.* close to
[754] the territorial stronghold of the *ragalk*—the *marrngitmirri* looks at once for signs of the tell-tale magic of the dreaded *kalka*, just as a man does when seeking the reason for what he accepts as ritual punishment.

754 Even in the culturally homogeneous area of north-east
756 Arnhem Land, the beliefs and ideas about the *marrngit* and
114 *marrngitmirri*, as well as about *ragalk*, vary considerably—necessarily so, in a matter which is strongly subjective. The foregoing reference to the role of the *marrngitmirri* discounts Webb's statement (*loc. cit.*) that this man 'possesses no special influence in the life of his horde or tribe.' It must be apparent that at critical times, when the sentiments of the
[753 kin of a sick or newly deceased man are aroused as they
761] are by the pronouncements of the *marrngitmirri* (which, backed by belief in his *marrngit*, are accepted without question), his influence on the horde in which he lives is one of life and death.

The Kalka *at Work*

754 The *kalka* or sorcerer is believed to be responsible for
753 bringing about the sickness and ultimate death of his
761 victim but he does not profess to diagnose sickness or injury due to magic, which is the role only of the *marrngit*. In practice, *kalka* may operate singly but more generally they work in groups of two or three. A sorcerer is likely

754 unaware of what has happened to him, but they assert that because of their magic he is unable to tell of his experiences when he returns to camp, although he knows that he is doomed, and prepares to die.

After a more or less prolonged treatment to restore the victim and to cover external evidence of his work, particularly in obliterating the tracks to the place where the body lay, the *kalka* wraps leaves—any leaves—around the hook of the spear-thrower and waves it over the prostrate body of his victim, especially over his head. The victim stirs. My informant simulated the groans and grunts of a man awakening from a heavy sleep.

As he recovers consciousness, the victim thinks 'I have slept deeply.' He thinks 'I have slept too much.' Meanwhile the *ragalk* has hidden himself behind a tree.

'I think somebody has killed me,' *i.e.* worked magic. The *kalka* now springs out from behind the tree and frightens his victim, telling him that he is doomed and that he will die. The victim recognizes the *kalka* and threatens to kill him. He hooks his spear on his spear-thrower but he misses again and again. He has lost heart. He returns to camp, intending to tell his kin what has happened so that they can avenge him. The *kalka*, joined now by his confederates, waylays the victim, and again harries and intimidates him. The man returns to camp but is unable to tell what has happened to him. In two or three days he [152] falls sick. He feels cold and lies all the time close to a fire. He is resigned to his fate and calling his kin around him he says, 'I am going to finish' (I am going to die).

756 The people, who jump to conclusions, ready to see the *kalka's* work, call on the *marngitmirri* who holds him tightly, examining his body. He sees sores—the *malli* of the wounds made by the *kandjurma*—and he sees that the heart blood has been drained. If the *marngitmirri* is not sure, not ready to accept responsibility for his diagnosis, he will call in others of his cult, or he will wait until [776] evening, when his *marngit* return to him. These often leave the medicinemen during the day and return to them at night. The *marngit* sit on his shoulders or in the *matji-tji* [145] (biting bag), a net basket made from strings and filled tightly with down feathers or with down (*rammau*). The *matji-tji* is slung around the neck and hangs down on the chest by a string. It is carried by men during formal ordeals called *makarratta*, and when fighting in single combat, when they put it in their mouths and clamp their teeth on it. *Matji-tji* are often worn by *marngitmirri* and provide a place of refuge for their *marngit*. The *marngitmirri*, after initiation to the cult, is able to see his *marngit* and talk to them. The people living in the same camp, although unable to see the *marngit*, claim that they can hear the *kaindjarr*—the sound of swift motion—caused by their wings, or more accurately, since not all use wings as motive power, the sound of motion. The *marngitmirri* [774 761] claim to be able to detect the work of *ragalk*, but not to heal their victims, because their heart blood has been [776 757] drained, the *birimbir* has departed and their internal organs injured or removed.

In the years that I lived with the natives in Arnhem Land I frequently saw the *marngitmirri* at work. He claims

that his *marrngit*, being spirits—supernatural beings—have the power to see spirit things. The *marrngitmirri* would often approach his patient as he lay on the ground, carrying in his hand a leafy branchlet. From time to time he would sweep the air and the ground, with a forward motion and then step suddenly aside. The purpose of this was twofold—first, because the *malli* of the *rogalk* might be lurking near and would reveal itself in dodging the branch, and secondly to drive his *marrngit* inside the body. The *marrngitmirri* would then quickly approach the victim and place one hand over the mouth, the other over the anus. The natives explained that, when the medicineman had driven the *marrngit* to the sick man or dead body, they would enter by the mouth or anus and walk about inside, making a minute examination of the organs. By preventing the exit of the *marrngit* in this way, the *marrngitmirri* could make sure that their examination was a thorough one. Later the *marrngit* would tell him what they had seen, for he claims that, after being tested and adopted by the *marrngit*, unlike the lay members of his group, he is able to talk to the *marrngit* and to hear them when they speak to him.

Some of the *marrngitmirri* said that their *marrngit* remained with them for a long period, often for their whole lives. Sometimes they would be absent for days when they went to look for the honey on which they were believed to subsist, in the caves among rocks which they frequent.

Wilindjango of Mildjingi, whose *marrngit* are shown in Plate J*b*, said that the *warrakan* (animals)—adding *marrngit warrakan*—had first come to him when he was alone in the bush. Originally he had only two. They hovered around and then sat one on each of his shoulders, and he declared that they looked like 'small pigeons.' They folded their wings like birds as they sat, but they talked like *yulngo*—humans.

All the *marrngitmirri* with whom I lived and to whom I talked about their cult, agreed that their *marrngit* had come to them suddenly and unexpectedly. Their accounts all agreed that in the beginning they had been either incapacitated by injuries inflicted by the *marrngit* and later restored by them or had been sick and made well again. Some of the *marrngitmirri* said that they had been invited by the *marrngit* in turn to test their own skill by injuring the *marrngit* and trying to restore them. They declared that this procedure, and these visits, had continued for some time—sometimes for weeks—before the *marrngit* had finally adopted them.

The medicinemen, in talking of their *marrngit*, referred to them as *warrakan* bird (or animal) or *warrakan kulong*, and declared that the *marrngit* often addressed the man whom they had adopted by the kinship term *papa* (father). Sometimes the medicineman applied the term *yoto*, child, to his *marrngit*.

The accounts given by several *marrngitmirri* agree in saying that their *marrngit* did not remain with them continuously but that they visited their *marrngitmirri* in his camp early in the morning and at evening, sometimes

[p.102(A)]

remaining with him all night. None of the medicinemen that I met in east Arnhem Land claimed to have a single *marngit* only, and the number varied from two to four or five or even more, as in the case of Wilindjango, who had six (Plate J*b*).

The *marngitmirri*, as he gains experience in the cult, is able to see on the body of a victim of secret killing spear wounds which are not visible to ordinary people.

As the drawings in colour in Plates I and J indicate, there is a considerable variation in the concepts of the *marngit* entertained by the *marngitmirri*, but all agreed that these are *wakkinngu*—profane, in the sense of non-sacred, with the special implication that they are not associated with, or dedicated to, the *wangarr*, and so not subject to ritual or supernatural sanctions. The *marngit* and their cult are regarded, therefore, by the natives of Arnhem Land as apart altogether from totemism. This essential distinction was pointed out to me by my informants themselves. They emphasized it frequently by referring to their *marngit* as *warrakan*—animals—a term that they never used for their totems, except in reference to the actual animal form which the totems sometimes assumed in ancestral times—for, being *wangarr*, they had supernatural powers and were not subject to the restrictions and limitations of ordinary men. They were *wangarr*, hence supernatural.

The people always described their totems as *malli wangarr*—the spirits or shades of the ancestral culture heroes—and therefore, *yarkomirri*, literally with, or having, a name, dedicated ceremonially to the *wangarr*. On ceremonial occasions the obligatory presentations of *ngata* (food) are dedicated to the *wangarr* concerned by the *dalkarramirri*, who acts in the role of high priest. And because of their association with the *wangarr*, all totems or totemic objects are subject to supernatural sanctions and are still watched over by the *malli* of these *wangarr* who guard jealously the observance of the rituals associated with the heritage that they left behind.

The demarcation between what is sacred and what is profane, between *yarkomirri* and *wakkinngu*, emphasizes the recognition by these people of the essential distinction between *marngit* and totem, between religion and magic.

Notes

[1] The data presented in the paper were obtained when I was under commission by the Commonwealth Government in Arnhem Land, prior to the war, and during the war while O.C. Northern Territory Coastal Patrol and the Special Reconnaissance Unit, Norforce.

[2] *Oceania*, Vol. I, 1936, pp. 336–41.

[3] See Donald F. Thomson, 'Two Painted Skulls from Arnhem Land, with Notes on the Totemic Significance of the Designs.' MAN, 1939, 1.

[4] *Tortork* is heart in the strictly anatomical sense, but some of my informants declared that it was also the seat of the *malli*, or shade, a kind of non-material or spiritual manifestation, which has nothing to do with the shadow.

[p.102(B)]

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

FAMILY LIFE IN THE JUNGLE

Theories of conception and birth have been severely jolted in recent years, for until recently it was not known that intercourse had any connection with conception, and Yulengor regarded it as being merely a natural and satisfying function. There are no virgins in aboriginal society, for at an early age a girl is handed over to her husband and is married for the rest of her life. In parts of western Arnhem Land, when hordes gather for ceremonies, their hosts provide them with food and also advance their wives for the visitors' well-being. The question of illegitimate children does not arise, for births are thought to be the work of a spirit.

At some time when the potential father is hunting, the spirit of his prospective child comes to him and presents him with a large fish or turtle and enables him to spear it. Not yet comprehending the omen, the man returns to camp with the spirit at heel, and when all are asleep this spirit enters the mother and begins its preparations for birth. In a variation of this belief, the spirit follows the mother when she goes for water, and jumps into the water so as to enter the woman. When a man knows that his wife is to become a mother he endeavours to recall some unusual experience that has befallen him in hunting. His mind dwells on any large fish he has caught, perhaps in the last month, or maybe several years previously, and he regards this incident as marking the coming of the spirit-child.

Half-caste children compelled a readjustment of these ideas. First it was assumed that eating the white man's food or the wearing of white clothing caused white-skinned offspring. An anthropologist, visiting an Arnhem Land mission station at the invitation of a missionary of irreproachable character, asked an aboriginal why his normal full-blood son had a light skin. The father's startling reply was: 'The child's mother works in the missionary's house.'

According to a revised and popular birth theory, intercourse is necessary only as an act of preparation. In itself

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

CHAPTER TEN

Medicine-Men and Magic

756 MAGIC, superstition, and credulity are inseparable from Stone Age medical practices. Healing magic is in the hands of a benevolent witch-doctor known as a 'marrnggit'. His name comes from the common word 'marrnggi', denoting knowledge, understanding, and insight. Good marrnggits are few and far between; their power and influence develop with age and astuteness. In almost every small horde, one man lays claim to supernatural powers, and although not professing to have the full inspiration of a genuine marrnggit [755] he will massage a stomach for diarrhoea or claim to suck out a mouthful of animal bones, pebbles, and blood from painful kidneys. A marrnggit is not made by choice, for the calling is by inspiration, and a mythical animal, resembling [787] a small honey-squirrel and known as a 'manggata', enters a man and transforms him into a marrnggit. Even so, a fully developed marrnggit cannot diagnose sickness or see an evil spirit; the little manggata does it for him.

Wattia was a good marrnggit, and it all began one day when he was asleep in his camp and a manggata came to him. The animal won his attention by digging a hole in his skull, but fortunately leaving the job half done. He returned later, when Wattia was seriously ill, and exercised his healing 'medicine'. As Wattia recovered, the manggata came the third time, and said: 'Do you remember that sickness? It was I who hit you and then returned and healed you. You know now that I have the power to kill and to heal.' Wattia talked with the manggata and admitted his claims, whereupon the spirit-animal took possession of his body and

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

victim will surely die. Hanging the reptile is part of the cure, and it is thus held hostage for the life of its victim. If the man recovers, the snake is released. It must not be killed even after the man's recovery, for if it were killed the victim would suffer a relapse and die. 752 755 825

Young Geitbapoi was bitten by a snake, and his mother saved his life by capturing the snake and hanging it in a tree. The snake appeared to be dying; the boy's condition also grew worse, and death was expected. But the snake passed a lot of what was said to be the boy's blood, and this was incontrovertible evidence of the reptile's recovery, and likewise its victim's. Therefore the snake was released, and in an hour or so the youth stood up and walked.

Power to kill by magic belongs to an evil witch-doctor known as a 'raggalk', who waylays the man and causes a deep sleep to fall on him so that he may squeeze blood out of his heart. Despite this, the victim lives an ordinary life till the raggalk decides to finish his work by sending a snake to bite him. As with ordinary snake-bite, the raggalk's victim tries to find the snake, to effect a recovery, but such a search is never successful, for the raggalk whisks away his instrument of death. For this reason, when a snake cannot be found after it has bitten someone, the injury it has inflicted is attributed to a raggalk. A marrnggit, or benevolent witch-doctor, can prove that a man has been bitten by a raggalk-snake by lighting a small smoke-fire, seating the man near it and blowing the smoke over him through a hollow pandanus palm-stem. In the curling smoke he sees the spirit of the raggalk emerging from the victim; he announces the name of the killer, and adds that nothing can save the life of the man. 754 752 [756] [787]

Scorpions, stingray, and jellyfish are numerous, but their stings, though extremely painful, are seldom fatal. Scorpions attack women as they dig for yams among the stones on hillsides, and it is said that the groin or arm glands swell 752 [36]

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

Faith-healing depends on an appeal to stars, water-spouts or Ancestors. If a man is wounded or ill he may appeal or 'sing' for help to a water-spout, for this is the only tangible link between the earth and the sky. If the appeal is successful, the water-spout sends a beam of light to shine on the sick man, and the light indicates that the water-spout has persuaded the man's ancestors to heal him. Ancestors later come in a dream and promise restoration, whereupon the man wakes up and says: 'I shall get better.'

An appeal may be made to a falling star, or 'larrpan', which sends a cool mist or fog over the patient to revive him, or if the star shoots through the sky and leaves a red trail it signifies that an Ancestor is on his way to heal the sufferer.

It may happen that a sick man is near his horde's totemic well; if so, he jumps into it and asks the mythical Snake to heal him. Though he cannot see the spirit of the Serpent, it comes out of hiding to lick him and restore him. If this totemic well is a long way off, a symbolical well may be scooped in the sand so that the sufferer can stand in it while water or sand is poured over him. His friends sit near by, singing the mythical story of Creation and calling on the Serpent for help.

754 food in fire made from a certain shrub; as the heat increases his throat swells till he dies. The trouble can be cured only
[755] by finding the fire and pouring water on it. If a spear or spear-thrower is broken and burnt, the owner's hands become crippled and twisted by rheumatism. A saccule or bark drinking-cup also provides means for injuring the one who drank from it, for if a pronged fish-spear is stabbed into it the victim's throat swells till he dies. Maleirpa the leper had lost most of his fingers and toes long before his misfortune was attributed to magic, but someone idly recalled that, years previously, Bulambi had followed Maleirpa's footprints along a beach and had aimlessly dropped the point of his pronged fish-spear into them. Obviously Maleirpa's toes had dropped off in consequence. As the victim did not die immediately, Bulambi was not
[683] killed, but when the afflicted one finally succumbs, Bulambi will need to make restitution to his next-of-kin by the gift of a canoe, an axe, or spears. Meanwhile Bulambi, the leper, and his brothers fraternize and hunt happily together.

789 'Nyirrah' is specialized magic connected with the making
787 of wind and rain, the poisoning of food before it is eaten, and the controlling of a woman's desires so that she can be made to desert her husband and follow the man of Nyirrah. Such magic comes to a man in a dream, by instruction from another Yulengor or by direct bestowal from the Nyirrah spirit-centre. When the body is asleep human spirits are free to roam and converse, and then a spirit with Nyirrah powers
[774] may invite another to see him kill a man or make rain. A
[778] more direct method is to go inland to a mythical tree from which Nyirrah powers are dispensed. Approaching the tree the man hears the beating of clap-sticks, and their very invisibility proves that spirits inhabit the tree. If he is brave enough to go nearer Nyirrah will automatically come upon him.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

754 several women and children were dead; other sufferers were retching, and rolling on the beach in agony.

When an epidemic of whooping cough from Darwin swept eastwards through Arnhem Land and caused many deaths, [164] a horde on the Crocodile Islands explained that an enemy [776] had released the curse from a tree containing the spirit of the common cough. By stripping the bark from the tree he uncovered the evil spirit and sent it to the camps of his enemies to afflict them. On the other hand he could have broken up the tree, burnt it, and sent the smoke to blow over them.

754 Old Manimba, lame and half-blind, was familiar with 753 magical arts and an acknowledged rain-maker. He also 789 claimed to have control over mosquitoes and boils. Spirits 885 of both plagues inhabit the pandanus palm, and when these [776] prickly fronds drop off in the wet season the mosquito and boil spirits are released to swarm over the land. Manimba usually gets what he wants by threatening to send some sort of plague. To rouse unseasonal mosquitoes he pulls a green pandanus frond and instructs its mosquito-spirit to swarm into the country of his enemies, and it is done. He can call up boils by making a fire under the palm and directing the smoke to blow over and inflict certain camps.

754 Death in any but the very young or old is attributed to evil 761 magic and the first consideration is to fix the blame, for 787 someone must die for it. When a man is killed his lesser [775] spirit follows the killer. Marrngeit, or benevolent witch- [756] doctors, claim to be able to see these enslaved ghosts, and they are called on for an opinion. They sometimes make startling revelations to the relatives, though not always without serving their own ends. I remember one marrngeit acted on his own initiative, and asked the relatives: 'Do you know why your brother died?' And when interest and suspicion were fully aroused, he continued, 'I have seen his "mali". It is following Jimunboi, and he must

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

have killed him.' At other times the marrngeit is called to examine the body and reconstruct the crime, for by his supernatural powers he can see the marks of the alleged wound, and by sleight of hand he pulls it open to prove his case. He can see the ghost of the killer lurking near the victim's body, or if the body has been disposed of he can still name the killer by an examination of the victim's armlet, spear, or footprints.

Birrinjauwoi of Milingimbi died from pleurisy and was buried before a marrngeit could be brought to examine him. His ornaments and personal possessions were therefore put aside for the autopsy, but when a trickle of moisture came from the lips of the corpse it was hailed as the best specimen of all and was taken to the marrngeit. This marrngeit was a wise man and talked to them and asked questions till he felt sure of their feelings, and then dramatically named the 'killer'.

A youth was killed somewhere in the hills behind Blue Mud Bay, and within three days we heard of it from messengers who ran with the news to us at Yirrkala. They called on the relatives to organize a revenge party, and personal possessions from the corpse were shown and small parts of his flesh distributed. In the emotion which flamed through the country, wailing women incited their men to vengeance. I was reminded of the biblical story of an ancient Hebrew tribe which received parts of a body that had been carved up and sent amongst them to cry for vengeance, and they swept over the hills of Palestine to exterminate a related horde.

Relics from a dead man are known as 'maiyabala', and consist of finger joints, small bones, fragments of the spear embedded in the body, dried blood, skin, flesh, hair, or ornaments. They are given to relatives as reminders of their obligation to exact blood vengeance and by the very acceptance of them the pact is sealed. A victim's lesser spirit